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# DRAMATICS



*The Educational Magazine for Directors, Teachers, and Students of Dramatic Arts*

Vol. XVII, No. 8

MAY, 1946

35c Per Copy

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Scene from a production of *The Man Who Came to Dinner* at the Holmes High School (Thespian Troupe 154), Covington, Ky. Jim Kanuf as Sheridan Whiteside and Lois Lee as Lorraine. Directed by Robert W. Crosby.



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*For Information Write:*

Miss Adah May Brady, Secretary to the Director

Department of Speech and Drama, Catholic University of America, Washington 17, D. C.

## NOTES AND FOOTNOTES

by the  
EDITOR

THE present nation-wide crisis regarding teachers' salaries and expenditures for education in general is sharply indicated by the following figures recently revealed from Washington:

"Our current expenditure now is about 2½ billion dollars annually for public elementary and secondary education. This amount is 1.5 percent of America's national income in 1943. In 1940—just prior to our entry into the war—we spent 3 percent of our income for schools.

"Before World War I we devoted more than one-fourth of all tax collections to the support of public elementary and secondary education. Today we are using about 5 percent of total tax collections.

"Between 1939 and 1942 the American people increased their expenditures for alcoholic beverages from 3.4 billion dollars to 5.2 billion dollars; for tobacco, from 1.8 billion dollars to 2.4; for beauty treatments and cosmetics, from 1 billion dollars to 1.5 billion dollars. Every indication is that the expenditures for these same luxuries rose to even higher levels in 1943, 1944, and 1945.

"Comparisons of these figures with expenditures for education give us reason for deep thinking. Obviously, a nation with so much money can afford to invest more in the educational futures of all citizens. If civilization is 'a race between catastrophe and education' we are giving education far from a reasonable chance. Surely it is as true today as it ever was, 'where there is no vision the people perish.'

High school students will do well to present these figures to their parents. The responsibility for saving our schools rests with us all, young and old. High school students can do much to arouse public support for the schools. Failure to provide adequate funds for our schools this coming season will mean:

1. Continued loss of teachers to better paying jobs.
2. More crowded classes next year.
3. Many classrooms will not have teachers next year.
4. Many subjects of curriculum enrichment will continue to be untaught.

Dramatics arts classes and clubs come within the curriculum enrichment activities mentioned above. Many schools this year are not having any form of dramatics activities because of the lack of teachers. The real losers are the thousands of boys and girls who are deprived of the well-rounded educational program to which they are entitled. The only solution to this situation is to attract to the classrooms well-trained teachers. This can be accomplished only if salaries for teachers are as high or higher than other professions requiring similar training and experience.

\* \* \*

With this issue we bring to a close our publication schedule for the current year. We want to express our appreciation for the interest and encouragement shown by the expanding circle of readers and friends who have been with us during the past months. We close the year with the largest circulation in our history and, while circulation is not necessarily proof of the quality

### New Subscription Rate

DURING the past seven years our yearly subscription rate remained fixed at the price of \$2.00, although many other publications comparable to ours increased their rates with the outbreak of the war, to meet rising costs in printing, engraving, and the other services required. We were counting heavily on the hope that prices would be reduced or would remain stationary with the end of the war, but events of the past several months prove rather conclusively that the line against inflation is not being held. To meet these increased costs we are compelled to raise our subscription rate to \$2.50. When the trend in costs is in the other direction, we shall want to be the first to reduce rates.

This increase in subscription rate does not affect rates given students affiliated with THE NATIONAL THESPIAN SOCIETY.

of any publication, we do accept our increasing number of subscribers as valid testimony that this magazine does serve the educational theatre.

Plans are already well under way for an even better magazine next season. For one thing, we expect a better quality of paper. Our articles, as usual, will be chosen to meet the needs of our students and teachers. The departments will maintain the same high standards set for this year. In short, we are looking forward to the 1946-47 season. We want you to share our enthusiasm and expectation of the good things to come.

\* \* \*

We compliment the many dramatic directors who plan to end the year's program with a banquet or some other social event, thereby focusing public attention upon the work of the dramatics department or club.

\* \* \*

An article by this writer, entitled "Qualifications of the Dramatics Arts Director," appears in the April issue of the Bulletin of the National Association of Secondary-School Principals.

\* \* \*

Some months ago we indicated in this department that many returning servicemen and women would eventually find their way as directors and teachers in our educational theatres. Our predictions are now being well substantiated by reports from well known schools of speech and drama throughout the country. Many of these newcomers can be expected to bring to the theatre at all levels new vitality and leadership that is urgently needed.

\* \* \*

We take this opportunity to wish you an interesting and enjoyable summer. Perhaps you will have the good fortune to spend a few weeks in complete rest and relaxation—always a good investment for dramatics directors. Perhaps you will have the privilege of spending part of your summer traveling or attending some reputable summer theatre. Or it may be that you will find it necessary to attend summer school for one reason or another. Whatever your future may hold for the next few months, we trust that it will bring you a good measure of fun and recreation!

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The Educational Magazine for Directors, Teachers and Students of Dramatic Arts

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EDITORIAL STAFF

*Editor and Business Manager:*  
Ernest Bavelry ..... College Hill Station  
Cincinnati, Ohio

*Contributing Editors:*

C. Lowell Lees .....	University of Utah Salt Lake City, Utah
Barnard Hewitt .....	Brooklyn College Brooklyn, N. Y.
Harold Turney .....	Los Angeles City College Los Angeles, Calif.
Earl W. Blank .....	Berea College Berea, Ky.
Arnold S. Gillette .....	University of Iowa Iowa City, Iowa
Paul Myers .....	New York, N. Y.
Louise C. Horton .....	Drama for Children Royal Oak, Mich.

*Advisory Editors:*

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DRAMATICS MAGAZINE

# Play Production in the Open Air

By E. TURNER STUMP

Director, Department of Speech, Kent State University, Kent, Ohio.

THE first drama of which we have any record was written for presentation in the open air. That play was the Old Testament story of Job. The scene was an ash heap outside the city walls.

Whether it was ever produced in an open-air theater we do not know. But one thing is certain. If produced at all during the first 1500 or 2000 years after its writing, the production was out-of-doors. Not until the sixteenth century in England and on the Continent was there a theater the stage and house of which were in a building. Throughout the Greek and Roman Period and up until the time of the early English plays and pageants the theater was in the open air. Many of Shakespeare's plays were written for outdoor production. One expressly written for the occasion was presented in an apple orchard for the pleasure of the Queen on tour from Portsmouth to London.

Today, many charming productions are staged in the open—among them the annual festival at Chapel Hill, North Carolina, and summer productions at several other colleges and universities.

Open-air production has been little used by our high schools, but in many sections of our country it could be the effective means for the presentation of early fall or late spring plays and festivals.

In simplest form, the audience is seated on a grassy slope, the stage is seen through a proscenium the sides of which are the trunks of trees and the arch their intermingling branches. The stage floor is the turf and the scenery such items and background set pieces, platforms, and steps as may be necessary.

Lighting is from easily constructed footlights and from a few flood lights and spots mounted on towers at the rear and sides of the audience area, and controlled by a simple, portable switchboard.

With such simple appointments and equipment the writer and his staff have staged on the Kent State University campus the following plays: *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*, *Alice in Wonderland*, *The Tempest*, *Macbeth*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *The Cradle Song*, *Liliom*, *Smilin' Through*, and the Washington Bicentennial Pageant.

This list will indicate the wide range and variety of dramatic material suitable for open-air production.

In localities where a natural slope is unavailable for the seating of the audience, bleachers may be used. Two scene racks covered with branches will serve as tormentors and give the effect of the proscenium arch.

There are certain procedures in solving the technical problems of open-air production that may be helpful to those doing their first outside show. We shall list these problems and indicate procedure usually followed.

## The Curtain

The hour of production is set for the early darkness, possibly 9 p. m. for a summer show or earlier for one in early autumn. The audience has gathered early—especially its younger members. The stage is clearly visible. A few—possibly three—2000-watt floodlights are on the ground at the footlight line facing the audience. At curtain time they are turned on. The audience can see nothing beyond the lights. The actors take their places on stage and at their stage posts behind the light barrage. The call is "footlights on, spotlights on, light curtain off." The scene is visible, the show is on. In permanent installations a water or steam curtain may be used. Also, it is a frequent practice to simply begin the show without recourse to any substitution for curtain at all—the actors simply advance in character and proceed.

## Footlights

The function of footlights in open-air production is simply to outline the stage floor and create the covering on which the actors perform. Therefore, they must not throw a beam upward as is the case in conventional theater. These footlights are simply constructed by driving stakes in the ground, nailing to them a board about twelve inches wide. This board is topped by a six or eight inch board parallel with the ground bearing ordinary light receptacles on its underside at twelve or sixteen inch intervals into which 40-watt Daylo-C bulbs are screwed. The stage side of these foots is painted flat white. The audience side is painted green or covered with fresh branches.

## Overhead Lights

An easy method of overhead lighting is to erect simple platforms, the floors of which are about six feet square and elevated ten feet above the ground. The frames of these platforms are constructed of two-by-fours suitably braced. The floor may be of sheathing. One of these platforms is usually placed at center rear of audience. The other two are on each side of the audience area about forty-five feet from the stage. On each of these three platforms there is mounted a 2000-watt spotlight with color frame. A pageant floodlight is frequently mounted on the tower at audience back center. An operator is stationed on each tower. His sole duty is to direct the light unit assigned to him and to operate its color wheel. The current is controlled from a switchboard usually placed behind a tormentor adjacent to the stage. The master of lights frequently stations himself on the tower at center rear, and telephones his light cues to the switchboard operator. At the close of the show the floodlights illuminate the audience area and the spots are turned away from the stage to outline avenues of exit for the convenience of the audience.

## Tormentors and Other Masking Units

These items are usually scene racks in the open-air theater. A frame work of batters is constructed after the manner of



Cast for an open air production of a Shakespearean play on the campus of Kent State University. Directed by E. Turner Stump.

the frame of an ordinary flat. These are covered with chicken wire, placed in position, and held there by wooden scene jacks. The day before the show the racks are covered with green branches attached to the chicken wire. These, of course, wilt, but are not removed. Fresh branches are placed over the wilted ones late in the afternoon of the day of performance. The result is pleasing and effective.

#### Scenery

The problem is not great. Space staging can be effectively used. Cut-down scenery with the dark of night instead of a black curtain behind it is effective. Full dimensional scenes such as the house in *Smilin' Through*, Julie's house in *Liliom*, and the Hollunder shack in the same play can be made and used without the masking problems which present themselves in the indoor theater. Generally, this scenery can be set on skids and slid into position quite readily. The open air lends itself to presentation of the many scene and vignette type, for wide areas may be used. For example, a castle may be built as the main scenic item for *Macbeth*. The witch scene can be played at one side. The drunken porter scene before the castle and the sleep-walking scene on its step. The battle on Dunsinane Wood can be played on its ramparts. All of these without a single change of scenery. Some of our readers will recall the University of Indiana open-air production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* in which large areas were used for acting purposes.

#### Dressing Rooms

Usually, a cast can don its first entrance costumes and initial make-up in a nearby building, the school building, the shelter house if in a park, or beneath the bleachers if in a stadium. Tents or lean-to canvas over an automobile parked off stage provides a dressing room reminiscent of the Greek skene or goat skene dressing tent.

The one headache with open-air production in many localities is weather uncertainty—when directors and actors cast many glances skywards on the day of production. It is best, therefore, to issue a rain check in advance indicating that the performance will be repeated on the following night in case of rain. Scenery may be fairly well protected by using Casein paints and shellac and carefully covering it. In some localities mosquitoes constitute an annoyance.

The charm of an open-air production, the delight in rehearsing the work in the open air, the fun in modifying or changing usual procedures plus the fact that, after all, most productions are not rained out and that mosquitoes are not always bad, constitute persuasive arguments for going primitive in the theater and doing the plays as they were done through the long centuries from Job to Shakespeare. With these advantages, of course, we have electricity, telephones, chicken wire, weather bureaus, and DDT.

# The Epic Theatre

By BARNARD HEWITT

Chairman, Dramatics Committee, Brooklyn College, Brooklyn, N. Y.

THE Naturalistic Theatre had aimed to consider modern man with the objective eyes of science, but its focus too often was the individual and its vision was too often clouded by the emotions of Romanticism. Moreover, it mistook the undiscriminating eye of the camera for the selective eye of analytical science. The Symbolist Theatre, repelled by the meaningless details of Naturalism plunged into the depths of the individual soul, where it lost contact with the outside world. Epic Théâtre came into being in response to a desire to make the theatre once more a part of contemporary life. In theory and practice it grew into a means of expressing the social and economic truths which have seemed so important since the first world war.

The fundamental notion of Epic Theatre appeared first in 1919 when Karlheinz Martin opened in a suburb of Berlin a theatre called *Die Tribüne*, The Platform. This group declared: "We do not ask an audience, but a community, not a stage but a pulpit." This idea of preaching, or more properly, of teaching became the central purpose of the Epic Theatre as it was developed by the stage director, Erwin Piscator, and by the playwright, Bertolt Brecht.

They were among the young and vigorous German artists who were not satisfied that the theatre should remain above the strife with which Germany was being torn. Mass unemployment and astronomical currency inflation were major symptoms of her economic chaos, and politically the Weimar Republic was feebly trying to hold a middle path between communism and fascism, while the pendulum swung wildly now in one direction now in the other.

In 1927, when Piscator, World War I veteran and strong anti-militarist, changed the name of the Nollendorf Theatre to the Piscator Theatre and began there a series of productions which continued until stopped by the rising tide of Nazism, the Epic Theatre began to assume a definite form. Piscator combined stage action with moving pictures in his first production, Ernst Toller's *Hurray, We Live!* a bitter fable of a man who comes out of a lunatic asylum after nine years, gets a good look at the world and decides to hurry back to the asylum. Before he can reach its safety, he is caught up in the mad events of life, from which he can escape in the end only by hanging himself.

For *Rasputin*, an exposé of wartime European intrigue, and probably the first "documentary" play, Piscator used three film projectors. The setting was a segment of a globe which opened in sections and turned on a revolving platform. The

setting itself served as one screen. Above it hung a large screen, and at the side of the stage was another small one. All three were sometimes combined with the living actor to express an idea. In one scene the big screen showed one after the other the Czar's imperial ancestors while the small screen flashed comments: "Died Insane," "Committed Suicide". Then the living actor playing the part of the last Czar began to appear out of the darkness of the setting, but dominated by a huge shadow of Rasputin projected on its walls. Thus it was made clear that he was the last of a line, all degenerate or mad.

Piscator's most famous production was *The Good Soldier Schweik*, a dramatization of Haęek's satirical novel. For this wry picture of the First World War as illustrated through the tribulations of a simple Czech peasant, Piscator set the stage at the back with three bare portals backed by a large motion picture screen. The stage floor in front of this was taken up with two treadmills moving in opposite directions. The treadmills served to bring on and to take off characters and fragments of scenery. On the picture screen behind them were projected captions, maps, silhouette scenery and grotesque line drawings by George Grosz, master satirist.

In the same year that *Schweik* captured Berlin audiences, Bertolt Brecht, dramatist of the Epic Theatre, scored one of his greatest successes with his *Three-Penny Opera* based on John Gay's *The Beggar's Opera*. In Brecht's hands the eighteenth century musical became an indictment of modern venality, of the connivance between criminals and those who are supposed to be the guardians of law and order. The year before, Brecht had produced his *Man Is Man*, a powerful attack on imperialism expressed in terms of the broadest burlesque. Others of his plays produced before he had to leave Germany were *The Expedient*, which explains why a group of evolutionists are forced to kill a misguided comrade, and *Round Heads and Peaked Heads* which makes fun of racial intolerance.

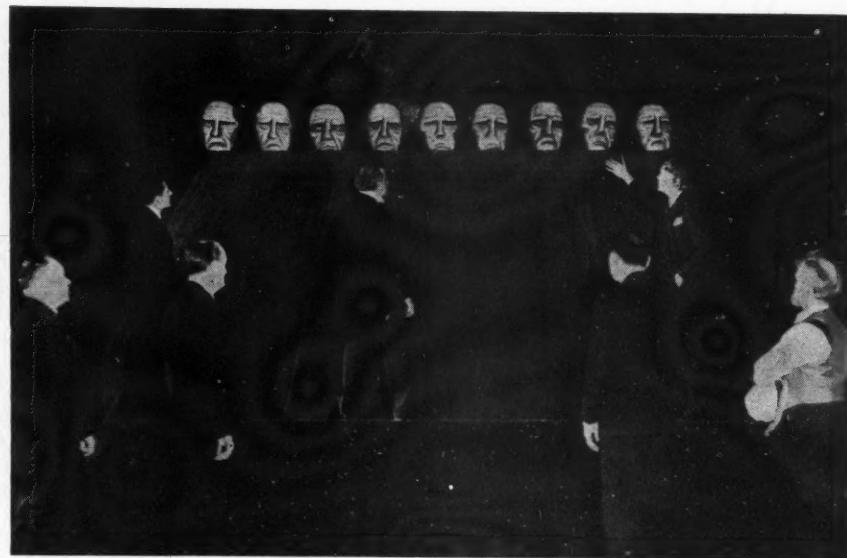
ALTHOUGH Epic Theatre aims to teach, its purpose is not to purvey propaganda in the limited sense. It takes its name from the distinction which the Greek philosopher, Aristotle, drew between tragedy and epic poetry. The first presents the actions of men, the second relates them. Moreover the epic deals with the broad canvas of events rather than with the narrow canvas of individual fate. Epic Theatre proposes to relate or narrate the actions of men rather than to present or represent them, and although it is not unconcerned with the

individual, it is concerned with him only as he is a part of the broad canvas of events. Older serious drama, following Aristotle's description of the tragic catharsis attempted to gain its end by arousing and "purging off" the emotions of the spectator. Epic drama is suspicious of the appeal to the emotions. It purports to appeal to the intellect and the judgment. Unlike other propaganda drama, which sways its audience by playing on its emotions, Epic drama aims to present an objective analysis of the facts, which it urges the audience to consider with equal objectivity.

This view of the drama as intellectual rather than emotional, as seeking to teach rather than to arouse, had marked effects upon production. Both the Naturalistic ensemble and the Symbolist pleasant integration were discarded because they appeal primarily to the emotions. Piscator seeks to create no illusion, either Naturalistic or imaginative. A scenic device does not have to fit into a picture. If it is *utile*, that is, if it conveys the necessary meaning, it is justified. Because the Epic canvas is so broad it requires especially that scenery be mobile. Piscator wants more machinery in the theatre. We have seen his fondness for the moving picture and he is equally fond of treadmills and revolving platforms. In the Epic Theatre, light is used not to imitate nature or to produce emotional effects or to integrate actor and setting but simply as a means of revealing facts. Costumes are designed not for authenticity, for beauty, or for emotional effect but as a means of expression.

The Epic Theatre demands something new of the actor also. He too must teach. It is more important for him to comment on the character he plays than to live that character. Under the Stanislavski system, developed for the Naturalistic Theatre, the actor sought to achieve a completely truthful impersonation by imaginatively recreating in himself the emotions of the character. The actor in the Epic Theatre seeks not to create an illusion in the audience by truthful impersonation but to secure understanding in the audience by means of exact demonstration. The emotions so painstakingly cultivated by the Naturalistic actor would only get in his way. The Symbolist method which seeks to express the character's inner life through patterns of speech and movement which fit into an aesthetically pleasing whole is equally irrelevant. The actor in the Epic Theatre must analyze the character he is to present in terms of the social and economic forces which have produced the character and then find patterns of speech and movement which will convey his own understanding of the character to the audience.

It may seem that the Epic Theatre is that contradiction in terms, a theatre without emotion—that a production of an Epic drama must be like a poor lecture, presenting dry facts in a dull fash-



Argument before the Supreme Court, a scene from *Power* Living Newspaper production of the Federal Theatre. This factual, argumentative drama had some of the characteristics of Epic Theatre.

ion. This is far from the truth, and the impression arises from a certain overemphasis necessary to indicate how Epic Theatre differs from other types of theatre. As a matter of fact, the best teaching is dramatic, and surely there is nothing more exciting than the search for truth. Because it seldom is used in modern drama, we have forgotten that narration can be as exciting in the theatre as action, a fact of which Greek and Shakespearean drama should remind us.

**T**HE Epic Theatre had its greatest success in Germany between World Wars I and II. Although both Piscator and Brecht have been in this country for several years, their ideas have never received a real hearing on Broadway. Nevertheless, Epic Theatre's determination to deal with the social and economic problems of our day and even some of Epic's didactic devices have appeared here from time to time.

Beginning in 1927 the New Playwright's Theatre for three years produced plays dealing with live social and economic problems. Among these were John How-

**W**ITH this issue Mr. Hewitt concludes his series of seven articles for students on "Theatres of Yesterday and Today".

Because of the popularity of these articles among teachers and students, the entire series will be reprinted in booklet form, with copies available at a small charge after June 1. Titles of the six articles previously published are as follows: "The Greek Theatre", "The Elizabethan Theatre", "The Baroque Theatre", "The Romantic Theatre", "The Naturalistic Theatre" and "The Symbolist Theatre".—Editor.

ard Lawson's *Loudspeaker*, Em Jo Bashe's *The Centuries*, and Upton Sinclair's *Singing Jailbirds*. Labor union groups about the same time began to present agitation and propaganda plays. One of these groups, the Theatre of Action, got to Broadway with three productions which used a moving picture technique: a kaleidoscope of movement, light, and voice. In 1933 the Theatre Union began a series of socially conscious productions which included *Peace on Earth*, by Maltz and Sklar, *Stevedore*, by Sklar and Peters, *Mother*, by Brecht, *Marching Song*, by Lawson, and *Bury the Dead*, by Irwin Shaw. *Pins and Needles*, the tremendously popular musical revue produced by Labor Stage of the International Ladies Garment Workers Union, had its relation to Epic Theatre also. The same can be said of some of the productions of the Group Theatre, particularly Odets' *Waiting for Lefty*, which deals with a New York taxicab strike, and *The Case of Clyde Griffiths*, an adaptation by Piscator of Dreiser's novel, *An American Tragedy*.

Although its originators deny that they were influenced by the ideas of Piscator and Brecht, and although it was crude in technique and limited in its scope, the Federal Theatre's Living Newspaper is the best example of Epic Theatre which has yet appeared in this country. *Triple-A Plowed Under*, *Power*, and *One-Third of a Nation* presented the national problems of agriculture, control of electric power, and housing in a non-illusionistic style and hard-hitting fashion which combined dramatic scenes with statistics and statements flashed on a screen or shouted over a public address system. All were based on undisputed news accounts and published statements. Even the professional critics liked this documentary drama. John Mason Brown wrote: ". . . though it has little to do with the theatre of en-



Scene from a production of *Ladies in Retirement* given at the Hazleton, Pa., High School (Thespian Troupe 257) with Marion V. Brown directing. Student players are Albert Feather, Dorothy Jallo, and Mary Rose Tita.

ertainment as we ordinarily encounter it, it is nonetheless theatrically exciting . . .”

The Epic Theatre, as Gorelik points out, claims a wider field than the fact-finding statistical drama of the Living Newspaper. It does not require that the teaching be done in such an obvious manner as with lantern slide and loudspeaker. It maintains that all good drama teaches and that this didacticism will affect every aspect of production. Its major contention is that if the theatre does not teach it is not a cultural medium but a mere pastime.

In every age, according to the Epic Theatre view, good drama has depended upon penetrating observation of life. This power of observation in Euripides, in Shakespeare, in Molière was an intuitive, poetic gift. Our age requires a consciously analytical observation of life. In Ibsen we find the beginnings of such scientific observation. In Hauptmann's *The Weavers* the observation is more highly developed but no solution is discovered. Gorki's solution to the problem he presents so vividly in *The Lower Depths* is sentimental rather than scientific and practical. Chekhov managed not only to describe the decay of a social class but to forecast its regeneration, but he bathed the whole in a mist of sentiment alien to the Epic ideal. Epic Theatre sought objective analysis and practical solutions.

It is improbable that the Epic Theatre will find any permanent place in our theatre. It is true that Bertholt Brecht's *The Private Life of the Master Race*, a careful analysis of the corrosive effect of Nazism both on those who accept it and on those who fight it, was produced in New York recently, but it was produced off Broadway by the Theatre of All Nations and several years too late. However, the Epic Theatre has unquestionably helped to weaken some of the convention of Naturalism and Symbolism. It has smoothed the way for the treatment of serious contemporary problems.

## Expanding the High School Theatre

By MARY GRAHAM LUND

Fair Oaks, California

THE role of the theatre in the high school might be immeasurably broadened and made practically useful in many ways. It should serve both as an educational and instructional medium and as an emotional stabilizer. To be of use, it must be made truly democratic. It can not be viewed as a means of entertainment or of making money, as a training ground for the professional stage, or as a means of advancing the prestige of the school.

1. *Some of its uses may be remedial:* (a) it may, on advice of the guidance clinic, help solve personality problems, or (b), it may be just the boost that is needed to help a pupil over the hump of interest in some subject, or in school work in general.

2. *The high school theatre should be a first-aid in a program to bring about inter-racial understanding.* If a mixed racial group work together seriously and intently long enough to produce a play, they must come to know and respect each other.

3. *The theatre may become a medium for free expression without the dangers which might attend an unhampered display of personality or opinion in the classroom.* It may be a melting pot from which new ideas and ideologies will naturally emerge.

The methods by which such usefulness may be attained can be only broadly outlined. *First*, membership must be open to all who desire it; *second*, the membership must be organized on different levels in order to give all a chance to work within their abilities; *third*, the theatre should

be broadened to include the writing of plays as well as their presentation, and audience participation should be encouraged beyond the familiar one of applause.

Free participation in the school's dramatic activities should mean universal participation. This will probably mean less rather than more organization. The drama has so large a place in our present-day life through the radio and the cinema that we must recognize and accept its universal role. Various classes and clubs may use the drama, either as entertainment or propaganda, or for instruction. The facilities of the school theatre, with expert advice from committees of the dramatic organization, should be at their disposal. The free expression that is obtained by the expert kindergarten teacher may be continued past the age of self-consciousness, with proper attitudes and guidance. This does not mean that every teacher should be trained in theatre, though to a certain extent every good teacher is an actor, and puts over the information he has to convey by the force of his personality. He also, as an educator, evokes responsive attitudes in order to "lead out" the personalities of his pupils. This is the basis of free drama.

In the past, the educator has not been able to use the words, *drama* or *theatre*, though he has used some of their methods. Such taboos are rarely found today, but there are difficulties of which we have already spoken in the false conception of the words drama and theatre and the scope of the activities so designated in high school life. When teachers and pupils have come to believe that writing

a play is as simple and useful as presenting one, and that participation in dramatic activities is as easy and exoteric as participation in sports and social life, we may expect a natural expression of personality and opinion through drama. The most difficult job of teachers and directors may be to keep the inert pupil from passive participation. We have seen our nation become a spectator of sports, music, and drama. We have lately seen some quickening of interest in public participation in the first two. Why not also in the last? We ask, "What is wrong with the cinema?" The chief one is its absolute objectivity. It deprives the audience of *all* participation, even the meager one of applause. No human warmth flows from the screen. Its Cinderella pattern makes of its devotees psychoneurotics who seek escape in wishful thinking, or schizophrenics who seek contentment and freedom through suppression of desiring. The present movement of adult religious seekers toward Buddhism and derivative sects may be offered in proof. Universal participation, in sports, music, and drama may be the antidote. The tendency is toward such participation, but only a favored few of the population now have such freedom. The schools should jump at the chance to make it universal, to work through drama for emotional stabilization of the next generation and the evocation of worthwhile ideologies.

**ORGANIZATION** of membership on different levels may mean a hierarchy, but only in the scientific sense, if its basis is democratic. Though the emphasis in drama, as in sports, should be on intramural activities, there is no objection to a winning play or team taking part in an inter-school contest or tournament, if there has been free choice and the student body feels that the members of the team or cast are truly representative and have earned their honors. If the entire student body has had a chance to work for such honors, the proper spirit

will prevail. A *chance* in dramatic activity should mean much more than "trying out" for a part by reading a few lines for a coach or a committee. The method which the writer used over a period of years is explained in the following paragraph.

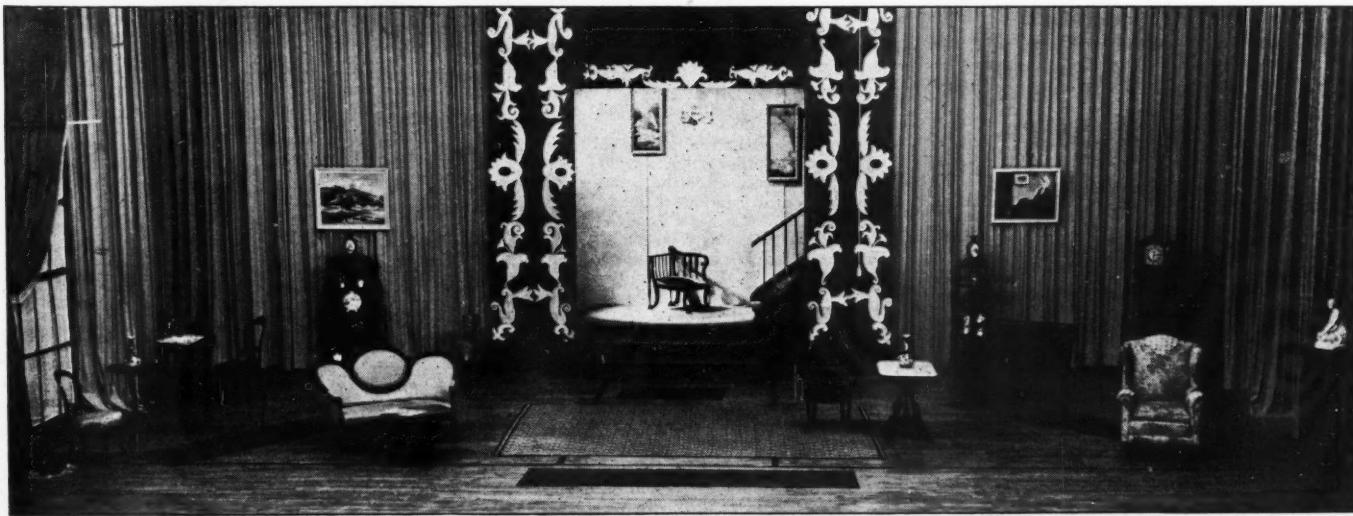
The aspirants were divided into groups of eight or ten by drawing numbers. This insured a desirable heterogeneity in each group. Pupils from different communities and social strata were forced to work together. Before the drawing, the teacher had outlined the work to be done and the methods to be pursued. When the group drawing had been completed, one member of each group drew a room number and the groups went to their respective rooms. In each room a student coach was waiting with at least thirty play books and scripts. Many were student-written scripts which had been used in previous years. The scripts were passed around for immediate examination, and the pupils were told that each must read and report on one play on a certain date. Each pupil was dismissed as soon as he had chosen a play for his report. At the second meeting of the group, after each member had presented his report, a play was chosen by majority vote. Each student coach handled his own problem of casting and training. Those who were dissatisfied brought their problems and complaints to the teacher. Sometimes an exchange was made between groups. Often a special group of misfits or leftovers was taken over by the teacher, who tailored a play to fit them, or wrote one to suit their special abilities. No one was ever left out because of his "attitude" or failure to co-operate, and everyone did co-operate when he had found his place. This method seemed to give everyone a chance. Often the most unlikely aspirants proved the best actors. All honors were always awarded by student judges.

Writing a play, to a student used to dramatic activity, is no harder than any

other type of writing. Plays of the lighter variety may often be presented from outline, the lines ad libbed by students willing to undertake the task. Opportunities for such dramatizations are frequently present in school life, as in advertising events before the assembly. Dramatizing a story or excerpt from a novel is only an extension of what the student has frequently done in the grades. It is not a far step to writing a play, either as an individual or group project. Every worthy play should be given presentation. A bad play may be suppressed by the simple expedient of placing the burden of production on the author. He can not put it on alone. He must sell it to those who will act in it and enlist the help of a student coach, unless he is himself capable of directing it. Then the group must interest some one sufficiently to allow it to be presented on an assembly program or some other occasion. A really bad play will hardly achieve presentation. If it does, a student audience will take care of criticism. Democracy in the administration of dramatic activities need not mean a lowering of standards.

**PERHAPS** you ask, "Why give so much time to drama in high school?" We may ask, "Whose time?" At present, a few who are gifted may give too much time to memorization of meaningless lines and rehearsals for a "show" to bring in money to finance a "project." With the new method, it may take a little time from a great many, with the worthy purpose of social training or personality building. A free and easy path to dramatic activity in the high school should solve many of the problems of adolescents. Play production is hard work. It exercises both mind and body.

The farther back the actors go into the child land of "Let's pretend," the farther they may forge ahead into the adult land of ingenuity and precision thinking.



Setting for the production of *Kind Lady* at The Franklin School (Thespian Troupe 468), Cedar Rapids, Iowa. Directed by Martha Anna Clifton.

# Western Films

By HAROLD TURNEY

Chairman, Department of Drama, Los Angeles City College, Los Angeles, Calif.

THE earliest pioneers experimenting with a sequential series of "still" photographs which, when glued together, composed a "moving" picture, selected a running horse as a perfect subject for the filming of action. Fifty years later producers in Hollywood are still featuring the horse as the chief exponent of action. In fact, the typical western film is nicknamed, "horse opera."

At first, sensational "feature" pictures showed a team of horses pulling an engine to a fire—the actual fire was not photographed, only the rapid movement of the horses. Then in 1903, *The Life of an American Fireman*, flashed before astonished audiences. It was the longest American film to date, five hundred feet, and required a full seven minutes for screening. In it, the horse assumed a secondary position to the story, but he was still important to the action.

The subject matter of fires, fire engines and firemen was quickly exhausted and producers switched to the cowboy and his horse. Here was a wealth of opportunity, a veritable gold mine of action, but the alley-studios of Chicago were too small, the new protagonist needed the wide open spaces of the West. So the foremost company of the era, the Essanay, established a studio in Northern California, a few miles from the "wilderness" of Niles Canyon, and sent its leading actor, G. M. (Broncho Billy) Anderson, westward. With the wooded hills and mountains of California as backdrops and the never-ending sunshine for lighting, the two-reel westerns became sensationally popular with eastern audiences.

Other producing companies followed. Soon the cowboy star, set in his native environment grew into permanent popularity—Dustin Farnum, William S. Hart, Will Rogers, Gary Cooper, Gene Autry, Roy Rogers—and the "western" film became a traditional offering of all organizations. Even today every company produces the western film periodically. Smaller firms, because the production costs are low and the income from rentals high and certain, produce westerns in great quantities and thus keep the organization financially sound. Even the more important studios take flyers into westerns—Warners with such films as *Santa Fe Trail*, *San Antonio* and other Errol Flynn starring vehicles; 20th Century-Fox with *Jesse James*, *Return of Frank Jenks* and *Western Union*; M. G. M. with *The Harvey Girls* and the Wallace Beery films; Paramount with *The Covered Wagon*, *The Iron Horse*, *Geronimo*, and *Union Pacific*; R.K.O. with *Cimarron*; Goldwyn with *The Cowboy and the Lady* and *The Westerner*; United Artists with *Stagecoach*.

WITH this issue Mr. Turney brings to a close his current series of seven articles on motion picture appreciation. Subjects discussed in previous issues were as follows: biographical-historical films (October), the musical film (November), screen originals (December), adapting the novel to the screen (February), documentary films (March), and mystery films (April).

Next season Mr. Turney will continue in this magazine with his discussions of outstanding new films released during the year, under the title "The Film of the Month." These articles will be addressed primarily to students of the dramatic arts, directing attention to the standards of production and theatre entertainment found in the better films.—Editor.

When the "big five" produce westerns, they are of the epic type and usually tie into some important phase of American history. Thus the theme gains wider scope and the story greater production values which warrant the usual expenditure of a million dollars. To insure financial returns the company assigns one or more of its higher-bracketed stars to top the list of players—Errol Flynn, Tyrone Power, Wallace Beery, Ray Milland, Barbara Stanwyck, Alexis Smith, Margaret O'Brien.

Of the major studios, Paramount has clung tenaciously to the cheaply-produced

## Playwriting Contest Winner Announced

THE DAYLIGHT GROWS, a three-act play written by Geneva Harrison of New York City, has been judged the winning play in the Johns Hopkins University playwriting contest for 1946. The Theodore Marburg Prize of one hundred dollars (\$100) has been presented to the author.

The inspiration for the prize-winning play came from a statement made by Winston Churchill: "We have broken the back of winter. The daylight grows." The play is dedicated to Miss Harrison's nephew, Captain George K. Loesch, a Navy pilot, who was killed in a routine flight after his return to the United States.

The Theodore Marburg Award is given each year for the best original play submitted by any American playwright. The award is made possible by Theodore Marburg, Baltimorean, who has long been a benefactor of the Johns Hopkins Playshop. Judges of this year's contest were: Mr. Donald Kirkley, dramatic critic of the Baltimore Sun; Dr. Ernst Feise, Johns Hopkins Professor of German; and Dr. N. Bryllion Fagin, Director of the Johns Hopkins Playshop.

western type, releasing in the past a long string of feature films based upon the pulp stories of Zane Grey and the hero-adventures of Hopalong Cassidy. In the former, the stress is assigned to the author, in the latter to the leading character. The minor companies, however, ignore these two ingredients. Instead, they produce westerns in series of seven or eight features, to be sold as a block over a period of months, with the entire emphasis, and resultant publicity, placed prominently upon the stars or upon a team of featured players—Gene Autry, Roy Rogers and Trigger, Johnny Mack Brown and Raymond Hatton, Charles Starrett and Smiley Brunette, Kirby Grant and Fuzzy Knight. Often actual first names of the players are assigned to the characters—"Gene," "Roy," "Smiley," Authors of these typical westerns are nameless, studio-hired, hack writers who grind out the formula by the foot merely changing the names of the characters and the locales.

From its inception, the formula of the western picture has been practically identical—the hero, the heroine, the villain own the same, broad, fundamental characteristics, pass through duplicating experiences. No attempt is made to characterize the characters as is done in other types of stories; the emphasis is placed on the action, the inevitable chase and climax.

The field of the western film has become both a training ground for the neophyte in film acting and a haven for the slipping star: Gary Cooper, John Wayne, Gene Autry, and Roy Rogers in the first group; William Boyd, Johnny Mack Brown, Buster Crabbe, Raymond Hatton, Al St. John in the second.

In the annual poll of star popularity, conducted each year by the *Motion Picture Herald*, a weekly magazine for exhibitors, tenth position in 1945 went to Roy Rogers, the third cowboy star in film history to find his name listed among the top ten money-making stars. The first to attain this over-all eminence was the late Will Rogers, winner of the 1934 poll, and the second was Gene Autry, who vaulted to fourth place in 1940, reappearing in sixth position in 1941 and seventh in 1942, before relinquishing these ratings to enter the armed service. As in the Autry case, the Rogers' rise followed sustained supremacy in the western field.

VERY occasionally one of the important companies in Hollywood produces a super-western film which becomes a giant in both the production and exhibition fields. To date the greatest has been Paramount's *The Covered Wagon* directed by the late James Cruze. It depicted the westward trek across the United States by the early pioheers, a subject as vast as the nation itself.

But the forthcoming super-super-western, *Duel in the Sun*, will achieve greater distinction and a wider world audience than *The Covered Wagon*. Produced by

David O. Selznick, who has earlier presented such features as *Gone With the Wind*, *Intermezzo*, *Rebecca*, *I'll Be Seeing You*, *Since You Went Away*, *Duel in the Sun* stands today as the greatest screen gamble of all times. As this article is being written, the costs to produce a simple western tale have reached \$5,069,000, with the film only now in its music-scoring stages. More will be added before the master print is completely cut and edited.

*Duel in the Sun* is costing over a million dollars more to produce than did Selznick's record-grossing *Gone With the Wind*. But being based on a novel by Niven Busch which had only a limited circulation, the picture has been deprived of a potential audience interest such as was accorded the widely discussed Margaret Mitchell best-seller. To make up for this deficiency Producer Selznick has launched what promises to be the industry's more spectacular and costly pre-release title-popularizing campaign. This is costing another million dollars.

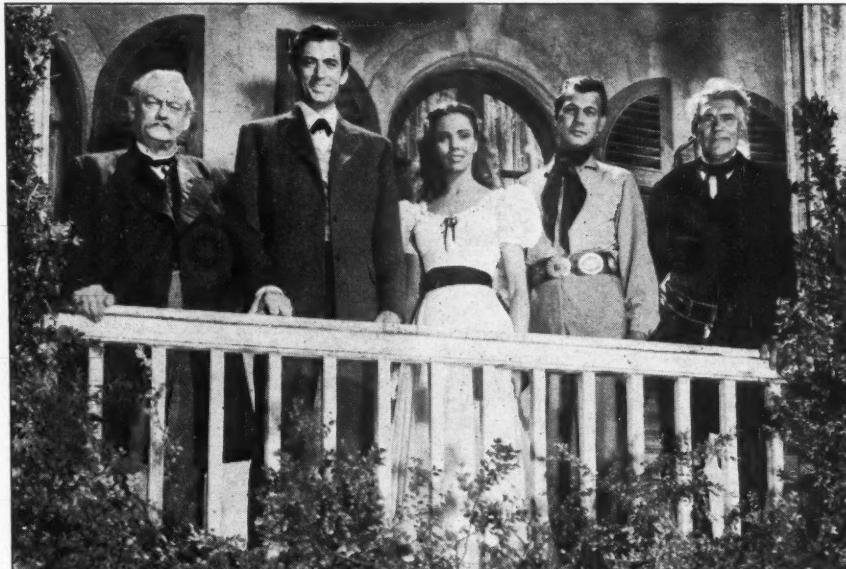
Then, with the addition of Technicolor print and distribution costs, the film according to studio executives, must gross more than seven million dollars to break even. Records show that few other pictures have ever bettered that figure. Among these were *Gone With the Wind*, \$32,000,000; *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, \$10,500,000; *This Is the Army*, \$10,000,000 and *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*, \$8,000,000.

But Hollywood's seers expect the film to gross \$30,000,000 in the domestic market alone. One observer said recently, "When *Gone With the Wind* was released there was an audience of 30,000,000 persons for a picture of this kind. They were willing to pay an average of \$1.00. Contracts for such a picture are written on a basis of seventy per cent of the box-office returns. It is a simple matter, therefore, to determine what such a picture will gross when you know the size of the potential audience, and what proportion of the admission payments comes under the heading 'gross.'

"Today there are 54,000,000 persons, instead of 30,000,000, who will see *Duel in the Sun*. They will pay a dollar or more. With the percentage the same as on *Gone With the Wind*, it is not difficult, therefore, to estimate \$30,000,000 as the potential gross revenue.

"What I have seen of *Duel in the Sun* convinces me that it has qualities of universal and powerful appeal. It has a strong plot, a remarkable group of personalities, a tremendous love story, as well as superb scenic backgrounds, and everything that spells the spectacular in production."

Beyond a doubt by the time the Selznick organization completes its publicity campaign, every reader of this magazine will see *Duel in the Sun*. The greater emphasis, of course, will be placed on the personalities heading the cast of characters — Jennifer Jones with *The Song of Bernadette* and *Love Letters* be-



Lionel Barrymore, Gregory Peck, Jennifer Jones, Joseph Cotton, and Walter Huston in a scene from *Duel in the Sun*.

hind her; Joseph Cotten, one of the screen's newest romantic leading men; Gregory Peck of *The Keys of the Kingdom*, *Valley of Decision* and *Spellbound* fame; Lionel Barrymore, Lillian Gish, Herbert Marshall, Walter Huston, Charles Bickford, Tilly Losch, Joan Tetzel, Harry Carey, Otto Kruger, Sidney Blackmer, Scott McKay, and Butterfly McQueen. Never before has such an amazing list of players appeared in any one feature film, not excluding *Grand Hotel*, M.G.M.'s previous bid for all-time top-name casting.

The scenic backgrounds will come in for a great share of the drawing power. Photographed in color against the natural backgrounds of the mountains and deserts of Arizona, actually forty miles southeast of Tucson in the heart of a 100,000-acre cow ranch, the film is spectacular in its projection of the locality of a typical western story. Usually Hollywood's outdoor pictures are photographed on large studio-owned ranches in the San Fernando valley, close to Los Angeles, where the companies have built "permanent" sets depicting western villages, houses, barns, and pastures. But not so with *Duel in the Sun*. Producer Selznick, to secure the native habitat of the cowboy, sent numerous players and technicians, thousands of tons of equipment, four hundred miles into the vast arid spaces of Arizona so that the film might reflect the true atmosphere of the original story. Such a move will pay dividends at the box-office.

All western pictures, to a greater extent, depend upon action as their stimulus for audience-attendance and as the final climax of the story. *Duel in the Sun* follows the usual pattern. Of the many action-climax two stand out prominently—the train wreck, in which Gregory Peck derails a freight train of the 1850

era, and the stallion fighting sequence, in which Peck subdues a man-killing stallion. These were directed by Hollywood's foremost "thrill" director, Reaves Eason, who specializes in directing action scenes. The most noteworthy of his past successes are the chariot race in *Ben Hur*, the land rush in *Cimarron*, the battle sequences in *The Charge of the Light Brigade* and *Sergeant York*, and the action scenes in *Gone With the Wind*.

The secret of a good action sequence, according to Eason, is to establish in advance in the mind of the audience the danger which is confronting the hero, then to make the action move as rapidly as possible. The more action taking place in the air, the more thrilling will be the event. Careful planning and the ability of the stunt men are important elements toward the success of an action sequence; also proper photography, cutting and editing. "The more cuts you have from different angles," Eason says, "the more thrilling the scene from an audience standpoint."

In the stage coach runaway scene shown in *Duel in the Sun*, for example, Eason used underbelly shots of the horses, pit shots from below, parallel shots from the side angles, and overhead shots. In the forest fire thriller, he called for eight camera crews and plotted out three separate angle set-ups for each camera which produced twenty-four takes from which to assemble the final negative. "It sounds extravagant," he comments, "but after all a forest fire is something you can't halt on a moment's notice and begin all over again for a retake."

Much can be said for the spectacular quality of *Duel in the Sun*; it will make film history and pictures of the same magnitude will seldom be attempted by the major companies of Hollywood.

# Radio for the Small High School

By FRANCIS I. ENSLIN

Director of Dramatics, Litchfield, Connecticut, High School.

THE most effective means of creating appreciation of the arts is through participation. This is true of radio and the motion picture, no less than of music, painting, and drama.

Of all the modern means of entertainment and constructive use of leisure, the radio probably has received the least attention in that part of the school curriculum designed to develop the students' capacity to make a constructive use of leisure.

No effort is required to cultivate the high-school student's interest in radio. He has it long before entering the high school, and he will respond with enthusiasm to any opportunity to prepare and present programs on the air. The performance of high-school pupils on the air is highly creditable, the results well worth the effort and small amount of time needed for the activity. Moreover, it is especially adaptable to the program of the small school, since practically no equipment is needed. A microphone and loud speaker equipment are useful aids in acquainting the pupil with the simple technique of using a microphone, but by no means necessary.

Here, briefly, is the story of what three small high schools and a neighboring city high school have done with radio. The program is probably unique. It is merely one of many ways in which radio may become part of the regular curriculum of the school or used, as in the present instance, as an interesting extra activity. The schools represented are Litchfield, Torrington, Thomaston, and Watertown High Schools, all located within ten miles of each other in Litchfield County, Connecticut. The facilities used for broadcasting programs are those of WBRY, the Waterbury Republican-American Broadcasting Station in Waterbury, Connecticut, a member of the Columbia Network, not over twenty-three miles from the most distant school.

Ever since 1937 various groups—musical, dramatic, and others—from Litchfield High School had produced sporadic broadcasts both from Hartford and Waterbury stations. Then in 1943 came a request from O.W.I., through THE NATIONAL THESPIAN SOCIETY, for high-school groups in the East to dramatize the shortage in lumber to stimulate farmers to help relieve local shortages by small cuttings in their own woodlots and thus materially assist in the prosecution of the war. Litchfield Thespian Troupe No. 456 responded with radio broadcasts of *Woodman Chop That Tree* from stations in Hartford and Waterbury. This lead to other war-time broadcasts that year over WBRY in what was called the High School Theatre for Victory Program by the Litchfield High School Vic-

tory Players. Scripts used were those prepared by the War Writers' Board and furnished free.

In 1944 the series was resumed for four months from December, 1943 to March, 1944, as a weekly Saturday-afternoon broadcast. The schedule was too strenuous for one group on an extra-curricular basis with many other activities to sustain as well. Accordingly, the Litchfield Troupe enlisted and received the enthusiastic aid of the neighboring Watertown High School Thespian Troupe No. 423, Miss Isabelle Rowell, director. Watertown shared the High School for Victory Program with Litchfield from January through March, 1944, the scripts still furnished by the War Writers' Board, the aim being to develop skill and experience in radio technique, develop language facility, poise, acting power, and to make a small but helpful contribution to morale and the war effort through dramatics.

The series was resumed again in January, 1945, this year with Thespians from the high school in Torrington, a neighboring city, and a group from Thomaston High School, another typical small high school, and the Litchfield and Watertown Thespians all participating. The series, still the High School Thespians Theatre for Victory Program, was scheduled for fifteen minutes each Saturday at 2:15 p.m., and was on the air for four consecutive months. The schedule was as follows:

## Station WBRY

(January to April, 1945, inclusive)

Watertown: *Box and Cox*

Thomaston: *Dr. Heidegger's Experiment*

Torrington: *Help Yourself* (War Savings Script)

Litchfield: *Why Must We Have War?*

Thomaston: *Tomorrow Will Be Ours*

Litchfield: *Unfinished Symphony*

Watertown: *The Return of the Fisherman*

Torrington: *Am I Late?*

Torrington: *There Are Three Things*

Watertown: *Alice in Wonderland*

## Hedgerow Theatre

BECAUSE of the great amount of production work required to rebuild an active repertory, there will be no summer courses conducted by the Hedgerow Theatre School this year. However, Jasper Deeter, director of the school, has announced that next fall for the first time there will be a full-time day course, as well as evening classes. These classes will be held in the Hedgerow Philadelphia Studio at 10 South 18th Street. Students will be interviewed throughout the summer.

The Hedgerow Repertory Company will offer the following plays this season: *Androcles and the Lion*, *The Gospel of the Brothers Barnaba-Martine*, *Roadside*, *Twelfth Night*, *The Emperor Jones*, *Uncle Vanya*, and *The Sea Gull*. The Company opened on April 20 with a performance of *The Devil's Disciple*.

Thomaston: *Foreigners Settled America*

Litchfield: *Left Jab*

Watertown: *The Proposal*

Litchfield: *These Honored Dead*

Torrington: (Title not reported)

Watertown: *Rumpelstiltskin*

Torrington: (Title not reported)

The program was flexible and varied. Litchfield and Torrington kept to the plan of making their broadcasts coincide with the war effort. Thomaston and Watertown generally preferred programs with a more literary turn. Groups varied from four or five participants to ten or fifteen. Some programs made considerable use of vocal and instrumental selections. Some were completely devoid of music, even lacking a theme on a record. Dates were switched to accommodate directors or groups with unexpected complications, and in general the series proceeded with a minimum of fuss and red tape.

THE series was fun and profitable. For two groups this was the first experience with radio. For all the groups the activity fostered cultivation of clear diction, correct enunciation and pronunciation, the use of good voice, pacing, timing, feeling, etc. Trips were made weekly in all sorts of weather and through the most severe winter in a half century. All groups gained experience in quick adaptation to real situations and unexpected events, a most valuable phase of education. Preparation included several half hour rehearsals the week of the broadcast (at least five of these are desirable), and an hour or more of rehearsals in the studio with the program director just before the broadcast, to polish timing, pacing, sound effects, and general microphone technique.

The series clearly demonstrated the practical and useful place which radio may be given in the program of the small school. Boys, in particular, who shy away from all dramatics, participate in radio with enthusiasm. Scripts are used without memorization. Trips to the studio afford an opportunity to observe the operation and control of the varied electrical equipment used in the broadcast. For at least two boys from Litchfield, this experience led to the discovery of a career, one as announcer, the other as a student in radio engineering.

Without exception program managers have been enthusiastic, helpful, and generous of time in arranging and producing school broadcasts. It is clear to this teacher that radio is an activity which is a valuable adjunct to dramatics, and more than that, an indispensable part of a modern program of education in its own right, and one entirely practical for the small school. Any interested teacher with imagination and initiative may successfully plunge without any prior experience, though some experience with dramatics is a great aid.



A scene from the third act of *The Fighting Littles* produced by Thespian Troupe 334 and the Junior Class of the Chardon, Ohio, High School. Directed by I. A. Canfield. Photograph was taken by Mr. Canfield.

## Tying the Play Together

By C. LOWELL LEES

Director of Dramatics, University of Utah, Salt Lake City, Utah.

**M**ISS JONES, our director, came to see our plays near the end of the second week of rehearsal. The lines had been fairly well memorized and characterizations were developing. Miss Jones decided that we were to watch each others plays with her for she said, "We often recognize our faults in others and we should strive to be as objective in criticizing our own direction as we are in criticizing that of others."

"Maybe I'm too objective," worried Peg.

"What do you mean?" asked Miss Jones.

"The more I work with my play the slower it seems to go. The other day, however, one of my friends who was watching the play told me that she thought the play moved so fast that she could scarcely get the ideas."

"I understand," said Miss Jones. "I suppose what I mean by objective is the ability to see your play as an audience would see it for the first time. That requires a greater objectivity than most of us can muster, for we must disregard the fact that we have worked for sometime on the play and know most of the lines. If we can't do this it is often advisable to have two or three friends see the play who will tell us frankly what they think of it. That's what we are going to do today. Make an inventory of the plays. To do the stock taking effectively it will be well for us to decide what we are trying to discover. If you were a member of the audience what would be your main interest in the play?"

"The plot, of course," I answered.

"That's right," she continued, "you'd want the exposition of the plot to be clear."

"You mean," added Marian, "the time and place of the story, the characters in the story and their past relationships?"

"Yes, and the preparation for the main points of interest in the story," Doug added.

"The story must build to a strong and conclusive crisis. If any scenes fall to build we must check them for rework. If the plot were clear and built effectively to a climax and the end were clear and clean cut, what would the audience then be interested in?" asked Miss Jones.

"The characters I suppose," said Peg. "And what would be of prime impor-

**T**HIS brings to a close Professor Lees' series of seven articles on "Teaching Students How to Direct Plays", published during the present season. Titles of the articles previously published are as follows: "More Plays Through Student Directors" (October), "What's in a Play" (November), "Painting Action Pictures" (December), "Seeing the Play as a Production" (February), "Finding the Cast" (March), and "The Actor's Best Foot Forward" (April).

This series of seven articles will be reprinted in booklet form under the title, "Teaching Students How to Direct Plays". Copies may be ordered at a small charge after June 1.—Editor.

tance in checking characterization?" questioned Miss Jones.

"Are they convincing," I said.

"But what determines convincingness?" she asked.

This stopped us for a moment and then Peg said, "It's the naturalness, the life-like quality of the character, isn't it?"

"That's part of it, surely."

"The character would have to be consistent, I should think."

"Good," exclaimed Miss Jones. "The character would have to be consistent with the first conception the audience receives of it on the actor's first entrance. All characters develop or disintegrate to a degree during the play. This change must be consistent with the first conception the audience has of the character."

"You'll surely find many things lacking in my play," Peg said. "I wish I had known these things before."

"You have time to make many changes," consoled Miss Jones. "You can't take inventory of your play much before the last week until you are ready to polish it for production."

"Are there any other factors to be considered in the inventory?" asked Doug.

"Yes," Miss Jones explained. "There are the items for which you have been largely responsible. These are harder to check. First, you must ask yourself, are all lines and business motivated? Secondly, do all bits of business contribute to the progression of the plot? Lastly, do all stage pictures conform to the principles of composition. Very often some bit of business that we have worked particularly hard upon when looked at objectively does not contribute to the plot and must therefore be cut out. If it is impossible to motivate a stage picture, or if it calls too much attention to itself, it must be changed. As directors we must convey a story to the audience. Anything that distracts from the story will



Scene from the production of *The Fighting Littles* at the Danville, Ill., High School (Thespian Troupe 59), with Miss Mary Miller as director.

weaken the play. The dictum, 'Great art does not call attention to itself,' is a good one to follow. It is of little value to be able to say, 'What a fine stage picture,' if one must hasten to add, 'but what does it contribute to the play?'"

IT was great fun to apply the questions Miss Jones had suggested to each other's plays, but a little breath-taking to apply them to your own. My cast was very nervous in playing before Miss Jones, even though I had told them that it was my work, not theirs that was being criticized. After the first few lines the actors forgot their fright and actually played better than they had before. I concluded that it was good for an inexperienced cast to have an audience toward the end of the rehearsal period. Miss Jones indicated weak and strong scenes to us. She pointed out things we had overlooked. She always criticized one's play in terms of the others. This made it clearer to understand and correct. What we had dreaded as an ordeal turned out to be a very interesting evening. Although she gave each of us several criticisms, Miss Jones seemed pleased with the progress that had been made. She said, "It was interesting to see our personalities in our direction." Peg wanted to know what she meant.

"Well," she said, "if each of you had directed the same play with a different cast, I undoubtedly would have realized it was the same play, but each of you would have added enough of your own personality and interpretation to make seeing the play again and again an interesting and fresh experience. It is this that pleases me the most about your work."

After Miss Jones and the casts had gone, the four of us sat for a long time discussing each other's play. We were almost too tired to care that our plays were

to be produced within a week. The posters were up all over the campus announcing the plays. There had been some sale of tickets, too. Yes, it was the real thing. We couldn't turn back now. On Monday the checks for the royalty would have to be mailed. There were so many little details to think about—so many things yet to do. Miss Jones had said most of our directing has to be done before the last week, for most of the time then is spent in adjusting the actors to new situations. If we had known what was in store for us, we probably wouldn't have gone home, but would have stayed and worked all night.

On Monday we had scenery, furniture, and our actual properties for the first time. This took what seemed endless time to set up and arrange. A miscalculation of a foot or an upstage door threw much of my stage movement out of balance. Rehearsing in the setting for the first time is a ghastly experience. The play looks as if it had never been rehearsed. I couldn't take time to rearrange my business completely as Peg's play had to be set up. I took my cast in a room off stage with the furniture and the properties to complete the adjustment. I was amazed at the many details I had overlooked in the manipulation of properties. For example, Jane brings in a letter and puts it on a table at one side of the stage; a few scenes later someone reads the letter on the opposite side of the stage. How did it get there? New business had to be added to get the letter across the stage. Almost every property had its peculiar problem that had to be adjusted. I was just beginning to make some headway with my problems when I heard a wail of anguish from Peg on stage. When I got to the stage I found Peg in tears. The table the property master had procured for her play was too large, the sofa too small, and the curtains were all wrong. I

silenced Peg with, "Actors can be temperamental, but not directors. They must be patient and long suffering. What will happen to your cast if you get upset?"

I solved Peg's problem by trading tables, an extra chair improved the sofa problem and the draperies' cupboard produced curtains more nearly to Peg's liking. With peace finally restored, I returned to find my cast scattered throughout the building. Although we worked Monday night until most of the scenery, furniture, property problems were solved, Tuesday night added costumes and makeup to our confusion. Although my problems were rather minor in relation to Doug's who was doing a costume play, they seemed major ones to me. After two hours the makeup really started to give the conception of the character the actors had worked so hard to portray. Although when the cast members first saw the leading man in whiskers, they laughed and giggled, they grew accustomed eventually to each other's appearance. We left Doug still hard at work. Finally he had to ask the people in his cast to make the necessary alterations in their costumes themselves. Wednesday we worked out the lighting of the plays. This was not so difficult as the scenery or costumes had been, although it took considerable time in experimenting to get the right color on the costume and makeup. I had to repeat certain scenes several times in order to get the lights to come in on cue. Some business had to be changed slightly to keep the actors in the lighted areas. On Thursday we had a complete dress rehearsal, and for the most part everything went fairly well, although our casts were so tired that they didn't put much spirit into their work. After rehearsal we more or less collapsed into the nearest chairs.

"Well, I guess we know what integrating a play is," I smiled feebly.

"We have forgotten a very important thing," said Doug.

"It's too late now, but what is it?" Peg said wanly.

"We forgot to polish the plays," Doug said smugly.

"If Miss Jones is right," I said weakly, "the plays are polished. She said that if you withdraw as a director and let the actors go through the play several times the play will polish itself. I've been so concerned with details this past week that I haven't an idea what my actors were doing."

There was a long pause and then Marion said, "Well, it has been a great experience."

"I've surely learned about the theatre these past weeks," I said. "We've all learned how little we really know about it."

I should add that the plays were a great success and that everyone, including Miss Jones, liked them very much. We, however, saw all the things that could have been—and, will be perhaps in our next directing venture.

# Little Black Sambo\*

A Children's Play in Three Acts

By LYNN LEONARD

## CHARACTERS:

Little Black Sambo  
Mother Mumbo  
Big Black Jumbo (Father Jumbo)  
Two Monkeys  
Four Tigers  
Two Peacocks  
Giraffe  
Elephant  
Several Strange Animals

## ACT I

**Setting:** Clearing just outside the jungle. Hut on Stage Left.

**Time:** Noon.

A few seconds after the curtain opens a giraffe comes in cautiously to Center Stage. He is followed by an elephant, two beautiful peacocks and two monkeys. The monkeys are the only ones who are not timid. They enter tumbling. The groups call—in song and holding the last note.

**Elephant:** Little Black Sambo.

**Peacocks:** Little Black Sambo.

**Monkeys:** Little Black Sambo.

*Sambo bounds out of hut. His step is sprightly and he wears a charming boyish grin. He stops abruptly, facing animals.*

**Sambo:** Hello!

(Animals answer in characteristic manner.)

**Peacocks:** Where have you been all day?

We've missed you.

(Sambo drops his head, turns his eyes to the ground.)

**Elephant:** We missed your songs.

**Peacock:** We missed your laughter.

**Monkey:** And no one likes to see us show off as much as you do.

**Sambo** (Kicking the ground with his foot.): Gosh, I'm sorry I couldn't be there today. But Father Jumbo says I can't go into the jungle anymore.

**Animals:** Oh, no!

**Elephant:** But you never come very far into the jungle. We always meet on the green patch near the river. That is not very far.

**Sambo:** That's what I tried to tell Father Jumbo. But he's mad at me. When he found out where I'd been going everyday—he—he—(He rubs his backside.).

(The monkeys laugh and tumble. The giraffe leans his neck forward. The elephant sways his trunk from side to side. The peacock struts with indignation.)

**Peacock:** It's not funny, you monkeys. Oh, dear, just think what it would do to us if we were spanked. (They strain their necks to examine their tail feathers.)

(Monkeys laugh even harder.)

**Elephant:** Here now, this isn't nice. If you don't stop laughing you can't slide down the giraffe's neck anymore.

(Giraffe shows agreement and the monkeys quickly subside.)

**Peacock:** Now, Sambo, surely Big Black Jumbo knows we are your friends. Can't you come and play with us anymore—ever.

(Sambo shakes his head and sniffs.)

**Monkey:** Oh, foo. Rules were made to be broken. Come along anyhow, Little Black Sambo—we'll all feel badly if you don't ever see us anymore.

**Peacock** (Coaxing.): You couldn't sort of—come anyway—could you?

**Sambo:** I—I don't think so.

**Monkey:** Not if you walked very softly—very, very softly?

\* Amateur theatre groups, including schools and colleges, may produce this dramatization of *Little Black Sambo* upon payment of the royalty fee of \$5.00 a performance to Miss Lynn Leonard, care of the School of the Theatre, University of Denver, Denver, Colo.

**Sambo:** Well—maybe—if we went very, *very* quietly.

(The animals all turn and start to tiptoe off with Sambo behind them stepping with exaggerated care. They have just reached the end of the stage when Mumbo appears in the doorway of the nut.)

**Sambo** (Seeing them.): Sambo?

(Everyone stops short for a split second, then the animals dash out and Sambo turns to her, looking shame-faced.)

**Sambo:** Yes, ma m?

**Mumbo:** Were you going somewhere?

**Sambo:** I—I guess not. (He turns his eyes to the ground and slowly starts walking toward her.)

**Mumbo:** Of course you're not. Now, Sambo—I don't like to see you sad—but you know your father means what he says. You come here; I have a surprise for you. (She enters hut.)

(Sambo signs and slowly keeps walking to hut. A monkey leans out from behind a tree.)

**Monkey:** Ps-s-s-st! Coming?

(Sambo turns, surprised and is just about to speak when Mumbo appears at the door of hut and calls.)

**Sambo:** Sambo!

(The monkey disappears quickly and Sambo turns to see his mother has her arms laden with brightly colored clothes.)

**Mumbo:** Sambo, I was saving these for your birthday, but I think they will please you just as much now as they would if I waited.

**Sambo** (Running to her.): What are they?

**Mumbo:** Well, now—what have you asked for all year?

**Sambo:** A green umbrella.

(As he names the article Mumbo holds it out and Sambo takes it.)

**Sambo:** A pair of purple trousers.

**Sambo:** A bright red coat.

**Sambo:** And a pair of purple slippers with crimson linings.

**Sambo:** Oh, Mother Mumbo, I love you! (He embraces her as best he can with his arms loaded.)

**Sambo:** And I love you, my Little Black Sambo, and so does your father even if he is gruff.

(Sambo turns from his mother.)

**Sambo:** He thinks I'm no good.

**Mumbo:** No he doesn't, Sambo. He just doesn't understand little boys. But I do. Now why don't you put on your new clothes and see how nice you look.

(As Sambo does this Jumbo is heard offstage singing.)

**Jumbo:** I work and work

As all men should,

For work is prayer

And life is good.

I work and work

As all men should—

(He enters.) Hello, Mother Mumbo! (He embraces her.). Is lunch ready? Well, Sambo—I'm glad to see you are taking my word to heart.

**Sambo** (Flushing with enthusiasm, for he has on his new clothes.) Yes, Sir!

**Jumbo:** And how, now! What colorful clothes! You'd dazzle a peacock!

**Sambo:** So you really think so?

**Jumbo:** No doubt of it.

**Sambo:** I wonder . . . (He looks toward jungle.)

(Mumbo comes out of hut and calls.)

**Mumbo:** The pancakes are ready. Let's eat quickly while they're still hot.

**Jumbo** (Starting to hut.): Ah, pancakes. I could eat a dozen.

**Sambo** (Starting also.): I could eat two dozen.

For an account of how this dramatization of *Little Black Sambo* was staged at the University of Denver, see the March, 1946, issue of this magazine, pages 16-17.—Editor.

**Jumbo** (Stopping.): Two dozen! A little boy like you?

**Sambo** (Stopping.): I'm not just a little boy.

**Jumbo:** That's what you say. If you were anything but a little boy you'd have other ideas except playing all day and you'd know enough to stay out of the jungle. And you'd be working.

**Mumbo:** Now Father Jumbo—don't tease him like that.

**Jumbo** (Becoming angry.): Who's teasing? I'm only saying Sambo is too young to have much sense. Playing with animals! (To Sambo.) Someday a tiger will get you!

**Sambo:** They're my friends!

**Jumbo:** Is that so! Have you ever met a tiger?

**Sambo:** No—but I'll bet he'd be a friend, too.

(Jumbo laugh merrily.)

**Mumbo:** You shouldn't try to scare the boy. Come now (She starts to enter the hut.). Lunch is getting cold.

**Jumbo:** We're coming. Better make it three dozen for me. (He enters hut.)

(Sambo starts slowly to hut but stops and crestfallen, sits a few feet from hut. The monkey reappears.)

**Monkey:** Ps-s-s-t. SAMBO!

**Sambo** (Looks up—says without enthusiasm.): Oh, hello.

**Monkey:** Changed your mind? Coming to the green patch?

**Sambo** (Dejected.): Oh, Tinka, go away.

**Monkey** (Coming to Sambo.): Sambo! Is that the way to talk to a friend?

**Sambo:** Forgive me, Tinka, but I'm sad.

**Monkey:** Little Black Sambo? Sad?

(Mumbo appears at doorway of hut. Monkey bounds out.)

**Mumbo:** Aren't you coming in to eat?

**Sambo:** I'm not hungry.

**Mumbo** (Crossing to Sambo.): Oh, come now. Black Jumbo has eaten a dozen already. (Sambo is silent.) You're not going to let him get that far ahead, are you? You always have a contest and you're missing the fun. (Pause—Mumbo puts her arms around Sambo.) What's the matter, my Little Black Sambo?

**Sambo** (Sniffing.): Father Jumbo doesn't think I've got much sense.

**Mumbo:** That's silly. Of course you have. But you're just a little boy.

**Sambo** (Rising.): What's wrong with that?

**Mumbo:** Nothing, dear. But Jumbo is impatient for you to become a man.

**Sambo:** I am a man.

**Mumbo** (Laughing.): Of course you are. But Jumbo means a man who goes out and brings things home—like food and clothing. Now let's not talk about it any more. You come in and eat. (She goes into the hut.)

**Sambo** (To himself.): I'll show Father Jumbo.

(The animals come in quickly.)

**Elephant:** Sambo—Sambo: What's the matter?

(Sambo turns, surprised and somewhat delighted.)

**Peacock:** Tinka says you are sad.

**Monkeys:** Look, Sambo, look. Let's see you smile.

(The animals dance the Golden Age polka. Sambo smiles once in a while. After the dance the animals crowd around him and coax him to dance.)

**Sambo:** No, no—please. I don't feel like dancing.

**Elephant:** Oh, Sambo. Something is troubling you. Won't you tell us what's the matter, perhaps we can help you.

**Sambo:** You are all very kind, but I have a problem that's a human problem. You animals couldn't help me. I have to prove that I'm a man.

**Monkey:** But how can you prove that?  
**Sambo:** I don't just know. Perhaps if I could do something—like Father Jumbo does—so that I could bring home food—

**Peacock:** There's lots of food in the jungle. There are berries.

**Monkey:** And bananas.

**Elephant:** And hay.

**Sambo:** But we eat pancakes. They're made with flour and butter and eggs.

**Peacock:** Eggs are a simple matter.

**Elephant:** And flour is made from wheat. There's wheat in the jungle.

**Sambo:** Honest?

**Elephant:** Of course it's growing there. It has to be thrashed.

**Monkey:** We could do that—we're always thrashing around. (*They laugh and toss themselves from side to side.*)

**Peacock:** So you see, Little Black Sambo, if you came into the jungle—into the deep jungle, you could get all those things to bring home.

**Sambo:** The DEEP jungle? (*He shudders.*)

**Elephant:** You'll see things you never saw before. Do come, Sambo.

(*The animals coax him.*)

**Sambo:** Well—well—(*With sudden decision.*) All right, I'll go. But I'll have to get back quickly.

(*He exits with the animals, trying to imitate their steps. When they are off stage Jumbo comes out of hut patting his stomach.*)

**Jumbo:** Ah, that was fine. I ate thirty, Sambo—see if you can beat—(*Stops short and looks around.*) Sambo? **SAMBO!**

**Mumbo:** (*Comes out.*): What's the matter?

**Jumbo:** Where is Sambo?

**Mumbo:** (*Looking around.*): Why—he was right here. I left him to himself because he was thinking.

**Jumbo:** Thinking! A boy his age?

**Mumbo:** He's a smart boy.

**Jumbo:** Of course he is. But—(*With anger.*) I'll bet he's gone off to play with those animals again.

**Mumbo:** Let him be. He has such fun with them.

**Jumbo:** That's all he ever thinks about—play, play, play. He'd better be back by nightfall or I'll—

**Mumbo:** He'll be back. Just be patient.

**Jumbo:** (*With great impatience.*): I am patient. But he'd better hurry home.

**Mumbo:** He'll be here. He's always back by nightfall. (*She enters hut.*)

(*Jumbo looks off-stage right and turns to hut, then looks off-stage again, grunts and starts to pace as THE CURTAIN CLOSES.*)

## ACT II

**Setting:** Deep Jungle.

**Time:** A short time later.

(*Sambo enters with animals.*)

**Sambo:** Oh, how beautiful!

**Elephant:** We told you so.

**Sambo:** I've never seen anything like this before.

**Peacock:** Nor this, Sambo, watch.

(*They dance.*)

**Sambo:** How lovely. You've never played like that before.

**Peacock:** It's the beauty of the jungle. It makes us feel so good.

**Elephant:** Oh, I feel good, too! For you, Sambo. (*Plucks large leaf from tree and imitates fan dancer, first bowing to Sambo, then goes into dance.*)

**Sambo:** Oh, what fun! (*Stops short.*) Fun! Oh, dear, why is it that all I think of is fun. I should be thinking of flour and eggs.

**Monkey:** That can be fun, too.

**Sambo:** How???????

**Peacock:** I'll get the eggs for you.

**Monkey:** Oh, foo. Your little eggs? We'll get some ostrich eggs.

**Sambo:** But what about flour?

**Elephant:** We'll pull up the wheat with a twist of our trunks, and with a few stamps of our feet, it will be thrashed.

**Sambo:** But isn't that work?

**Elephant:** Nothing is work if you decide it's fun.

**Sambo:** Oh. (*Thoughtfully.*) That must be

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why Father Jumbo enjoys it.

**Elephant:** Well—we're off! (*They turn to leave.*)

**Monkey:** Last one back is a monkey! (*They rush off.*)

**Sambo:** Oh—they shouldn't do that! (*To giraffe and peacock.*) Are you leaving, too? (*He looks afraid for it is beginning to grow dark.*)

**Peacock:** No. You stay right here. Let's play some more.

**Sambo:** It doesn't seem right that I should play while others work.

**Peacock:** Yes. Your father works, doesn't he?

**Sambo:** Yes—but—(*Trying to convince himself.*) That's different.

**Peacock:** Giraffe, don't you think you can entertain Sambo while I do some preening?

**Sambo:** Preening?

**Peacock:** Yes. I must keep up my appearance. (*Looks Sambo up and down.*) I have notable competition nowadays. (*Exits.*)

**Sambo:** Well—what shall we do?

(*Giraffe pantomimes hide-and-seek.*)

**Sambo:** Oh, hide-and-seek. All right. You hide first. (*Sambo puts his head in his arms. Giraffe looks around, finally puts his head up in the branches of a tree. Sambo calls, "Here I come—ready or not."*) Turns around, sees giraffe with only head hidden. Sambo laughs.) Hiding your head isn't enough. (*Giraffe comes sadly downstage.*) Now it's my turn. You turn away. (*Giraffe turns. Sambo looks around and then tiptoes offstage. Giraffe stamps his foot, then turns around. He wanders around stage, poking his head here and there, then wanders off the stage in the opposite direction that Sambo has taken, still looking. Sambo returns.*) Here I am! Here I am! (*Doesn't see giraffe and pokes around in bushes.*) Hey, where are you; I was the one that was supposed to hide. (*The stage has grown darker by this time. Sambo becomes frightened and talks to himself to keep his spirits up.*) Now, Sambo—they'll be back! Just don't be afraid. (*A noise offstage. Sambo jumps.*) By this time the moon begins to shine through the trees.) What was that? (*Silence.*) Now, Sambo, you're a man—you're not afraid. (*Another noise—Sambo is terrified and jumps again.*) Yes, I am! (*He begins to sniff.*) I want to go home! But I don't know how to get back. I've never been this far into the jungle before! (*He walks, shaking, to the right side of the stage and sits half-concealed in the bushes.*)

(*Weird music starts and a parade of strange animals file in slowly from Stage Left. They do a ritual dance in the moonlight spot Center Stage. At the end of it one of the animals speaks.*)

**1st Animal:** (*Who looks like a worry-bird.*): I feel as if someone were watching us. Some—one human.

**2nd Animal:** Who would be this deep in the jungle? Don't be so nervous. You've acted like that ever since we heard that the tigers were out tonight.

(*Sambo jumps out of bushes.*)

**Sambo:** **TIGERS!!!!**

(*The animals all are frightened by his sudden appearance.*)

**1st Animal:** I told you! I told you someone was watching.

**2nd Animal:** But it's just a little boy.

**1st Animal:** Little boy or what-ever-he-is, you know it's bad luck for any human creature to witness the secrets of the jungle.

**2nd Animal:** I suppose you're going to blame the tigers' visit on the little boy.

**1st Animal:** That might be true. Perhaps they smelled human flesh and that's what brought them here. (*To Sambo, angrily.*) Why are you here?

**Sambo:** I—I came with my friends.

**1st Animal:** What friends?

**Sambo:** The monkeys—and the elephant—and the giraffe—and

**2nd Animal:** You see? He's a friend to the jungle.

**Sambo:** I'll be your friend, too, if you'll let me.

**3rd Animal:** Of course you're our friend. And because you are a friend I think we ought to warn you to go home.

**Sambo:** But I can't! I don't know the way home. (*He is literally scared stiff.*)

**1st Animal:** How did you get here?

**Sambo:** I followed my friends.

**1st Animal:** Where are they?

**Sambo:** I don't know. (*Hastily.*) But they're coming back.

**1st Animal:** They'd better hurry. Nightfall is time for everyone to go home.

(*A tiger's roar is heard. All the strange animals flee off stage right but Sambo, being "scared stiff" is unable to budge. The tigers wander in—four of them.*)

**Tiger No. 1:** Well!!! Just look what I see. (*He goes up to Sambo, sniffs him.*) A-ha! What a delicious meal he will make.

(*The other tigers crowd around Sambo. Sambo is shaking with terror and rolling his eyes.*)

**Tiger No. 2:** A-ha! Chocolate flavor! (*He smacks his lips.*)

**Sambo:** (*Jerking into motion.*): You're only playing, aren't you? You don't mean you're really going to eat me, do you? You're my friends, aren't you?

(*Tigers laugh and snarl hideously—like a professor preparing a final examination.*)

**Tiger No. 1:** Friend? When is a man a friend to a tiger? What are you doing in the jungle? The jungle belongs to us!

**Sambo:** I came with my friends—the giraffe—and elephant—and monkeys—and the peacock.

**Tiger No. 2:** Peacock! Bah! Useless vain thing. But good to eat. (*Turns on Sambo viciously.*) And YOU will make even a better meal.

**Sambo:** Oh, no! (*He starts to back away. With a growl the tigers spring and encircle him.*)

**Tiger No. 1:** Going somewhere?

**Sambo:** I—I guess not . . . Oh dear—that's just what my mother asked me! How I wish I had minded her and Father Jumbo and stayed home!

**Tiger No. 2:** Too bad!!! But good for us. (*The tigers start to walk about him in a circle.*) Ah—won't he be a fine feast? (*The tigers smack their lips. Tiger No. 4 sniffs SAMBO from head to toe in the magnificent sweep—he howls with delight.*)

**Sambo:** Oh, please, please don't eat me. (*The tigers sit, in their circle around him, and survey him, contemplating their delicacy.*) If you let me go I'll—I'll do you a favor in return.

**Tiger No. 3:** Ho, ho—and what could you do for us?

**Sambo:** I'll—I'll give you my most precious possessions. My clothes! (*He touches the clothes lovingly.*)

**Tiger No. 4:** What do we want clothes for? We are beautiful. (*The tigers lick their coats and paws.*)

**Sambo:** Oh yes, you are very beautiful—but these will make you even more so! More beautiful than the peacock!

**Tiger No. 1:** (*Approaching SAMBO.*): Is that

so? Prove it!

Sambo: Well—here! (He takes off his coat.)

Put it on.

(Tiger struggles with coat.)

Tiger No. 1 (With coat on.): There! (He struts.) How do I look?

Sambo (In a choked voice.): Beautiful! Beautiful!

(First tiger struts to Stage Left with great dignity.)

Tiger No. 2: What about me?

Sambo: Well—(He looks at his trousers and fondly touches them.) You try these. (He takes them off quickly—biting his lips as he does so.)

(Tiger No. 2 puts them on and struts.)

Tiger No. 2: Well? How do I look?

Sambo (More choked.): Beautiful! Beautiful!

(Tiger No. 2 struts to Stage Left. He snubs tiger No. 1 who snubs him in return. This process follows with each tiger as he goes to Stage Left.)

Tiger No. 3: What do I get?

Sambo (Surveys himself. Finally he extends his umbrella.) Here—you can have my green umbrella.

Tiger No. 3: What do I want with an umbrella?

Sambo: It will keep the hot sun off your coat of fur.

Tiger No. 3: It does get hot in the jungle—sometimes I think I'll melt! But how can I carry it?

Sambo: I'll tie it on your tail.

Tiger No. 3 (Haughtily.): Very well. (He turns his back to Sambo. Just as Sambo starts to take up the tail gingerly the tiger turns his head and growls.) But mind you—no pulling.

Sambo (Nods his head and, shaking, ties umbrella in knot of tail.): There you are.

Tiger No. 3 (Sniffs with his nose in the air.): Thank you. (He goes to stage left.)

(Sambo watches him retreat sadly. Fourth tiger comes up behind Sambo and snarls.)

Tiger No. 4: And what is left for me?

Sambo (Jumps around to face him.): I—I—(He looks at his feet.) I only have purple slippers with the crimson linings left. But (he sniffs as he takes them off.) you can have them . . . (he extends them.)

(Tiger No. 4 puts his nose in the air and turns away.)

Tiger No. 4: Slippers! (He sniffs haughtily.) What do I want with slippers—I have four feet, not two.

Sambo: You could wear them on your ears.

Tiger No. 4 (Grabbing the slippers and putting them on.): Well? How do I look?

Sambo (Near tears.): Oh, quite in fashion.

Tiger No. 4: Oh, ho! (He walks to tigers who are already eyeing each other dangerously.) I am the most fashionable.

Tiger No. 3: I am the wisest.

Tigers No. 1 and 2: I am the most beautiful. (The tigers snarl at each other. Sambo stands Center Stage—fascinated.)

Tiger No. 4 I am the best.

Tiger No. 3: I am the best.

Tiger No. 2: No, no—I am the best!

Tiger No. 1: See here. All of you. I am still the best.

(They snarl and start roughly pushing each other around.)

Sambo: Oh, please, please, don't fight.

Tigers (In chorus.): You can't tell us what to do.

Sambo: Oh my clothes, my beautiful clothes. If you must fight, please take them off!

Tiger No. 1: I am the best even without the clothes. I can fight best without this foolish thing anyway. (He takes off the coat and puts it on the ground. The other tigers make similar remarks and all clothing is piled in a heap on Stage Left. As soon as they all have taken the clothing off, they start growling and circling about. Music starts fading in. The tigers get angrier and angrier. Suddenly Tiger No. 1 runs diagonally across the stage to the tree back Right Stage. As they pass Sambo he runs toward the pile of clothing. The tigers circle around the tree, running faster and faster as music increases tempo. Color wheel plays on



*Little Black Sambo* as staged by the Children's Theatre Workshop of the University of Denver. Directed by Joyce McMillan and Sister Mary Sarah.

them. Sambo meanwhile picks up umbrella and puts it in front of him, peeking over the top of it occasionally as the music rises to a crescendo. CURTAIN CLOSES.)

### ACT III

Setting: Same as Act I.

Time: Following morning.

Curtain opens on Mumbo sitting before hut, moaning and swaying from side to side. Jumbo enters from Stage Right, looking worried. Mumbo rises.

Mumbo: Did you find him? Did you find him?

Jumbo: No. I searched all night. (He puts his arm around Mumbo.) There now—don't cry, Mother Mumbo.

Mumbo: It was all my fault. I told you to let him do as he pleased.

Jumbo: No, it was my fault. If I understood him I would have let him play with the animals—in the green patch—or let the animals know I felt they were friends and they would have learned they were safe to play here. (He indicates clearing.)

Mumbo: Wasn't he at the green patch?

Jumbo: No. There was nothing there. He must have gone into the deep jungle.

(Mumbo wails.)

Jumbo: Oh, please! He may be safe.

(Sambo enters Stage Right carrying umbrella upside down, Elephant carrying trousers filled with flour, monkeys carrying eggs, and giraffe and peacock following them.)

Sambo: Mother Mumbo . . . Father Jumbo! (He puts umbrella down and rushes to meet them Center Stage.)

(There is a general clamor about "You're safe." The animals remain stage right nodding in approval at the joyful family reunion.)

Sambo: Of course I'm safe. But I'm sorry to be late.

Monkeys: That was our fault.

Elephant: Mine, too.

Sambo: But look what we brought you. (He gathers flour and eggs and puts them before his parents.) Flour and eggs for pancakes.

Jumbo: That's fine, that's fine . . . but how did you get them.

Sambo: (Gesturing toward the animals.): Oh, they got them. I told you they were friends. (The animals mumble and nod their heads.)

Mumbo: That's very nice, Sambo. But why

did you run away!

Sambo: I wanted to prove that I could do like Father Jumbo does . . . and bring things like this. Of course my friends are responsible for these. (Indicates flour and eggs.) but I brought back the most important thing.

Elephant: He would have been back on time, but we were late getting our share and when we got back, it was too dark to find our way here again.

Mumbo: So Sambo slept in the trees with us. Mumbo: (Shocked.) WHAT ? ?

Sambo: Oh, is was very safe. (Sobers.) But I don't think I want to spend the night in the jungle again.

Jumbo: I should say you won't spend the night in the jungle again. If you want to play with your friends . . . our friends. (The animals react with joy.) you can do it in the clearing here . . . or in the green patch near.

Sambo: Oh, Father Jumbo! That's wonderful news. But I have even better news.

Jumbo: What's this? What's this?

Sambo: We don't have to fear the tigers anymore. (Mischievously.) Mother Mumbo . . . what else do you need for pancakes besides flour and eggs?

Mumbo: Why, butter of course.

Sambo: (Skipping to the umbrella.): And here it is. (Brings umbrella to parents.) Taste it.

(Mumbo and Jumbo stick their fingers in and taste it.)

Jumbo: It is fine butter.

Sambo: A very special butter. Tiger-butter. Did you know that if a tiger runs fast enough and gets real hot and mad, he melts?

Mumbo: WHAT ? ?

Sambo: I'll tell you how it happened later. But I'm a bit hungry right now. Mother Mumbo . . . could I have some pancakes for breakfast?

Mumbo: (Embraces him.): You certainly can. And our friends (Gestures toward animals.) can, too. I myself will eat 56 of them!

Jumbo: I will eat 96.

Sambo: And I will eat one hundred and twenty-four of them!

Jumbo: I do believe you're man enough to do just that!

(Everyone laughs. Mumbo goes into hut with ingredients in her arms and Sambo and Jumbo join the animals in a dance as

THE CURTAIN CLOSES

# THEATER on BROADWAY

by Paul Myers

264 Lexington Ave., New York City.

Readers of this magazine may order tickets for Broadway plays through Mr. Myers. Request should be accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope.

THE New York theatre has been suffering through an attack of the doldrums, but signs of recovery are being shown. With few exceptions, all of the new productions of the past month have opened and closed in a brief interval of time. Of them all only the Theatre Guild's revival of Andreyev's *He Who Gets Slapped* has displayed any sign of real vigor and prosperity. Staged by Tyrone Guthrie, with a cast including Dennis King, Stella Adler, John Abbott and Reinhold Schunzel, Andreyev's original play of circus life has been revised for this production by Judith Guthrie. Unfortunately, a slip-up in ticket arrangements postponed this reviewer's visit, so I shall not be able to give a detailed description of the production here.

## Truckline Cafe

A NEW play by Maxwell Anderson is always an event of the greatest importance, but few have occasioned the furore of the latest, *Truckline Cafe*. Produced at the Belasco Theatre by Harold Clurman and Elia Kazan (two of the stalwarts of the defunct Group Theatre) in association with the Playwrights' Company, it set off with renewed fire the old battle between the theatrical producers and the dramatic critics. The reviews were, on the whole, unfavorable and attendance at the Belasco as a result was slight. When the play closed on March 9th, however, it did so with protest and invective being shouted around it. It did not slip quietly away to become quickly forgotten. It had been made a cause celebre—or as much of one as it was possible. The producers placed large notices on the theatre pages of the daily papers addressed to "The Theatre-Going Public" and "To All Lovers of the Theatre." In one of them the Messrs. Clurman and Kazan pointed out:

"Our theatre is strangled in a bottleneck. That bottleneck is made up of a group of men who are hired to report the events of our stage and who more and more are acquiring powers which, as a group, they are not qualified to exercise—either by their training or by their taste. And it is increasingly becoming the case that these men are deciding what plays are given hearings, what plays make up the institution which is our theatre, and what plays are given a chance to find an audience."

Much as one agrees that too few of us form our own opinions of new productions, and that too many are swayed by the verdict of a drama critic; it is unfortunate that *Truckline Cafe* has been

employed as the case in point.

Mr. Anderson's newest play is weak and lacks the qualities which made some of its predecessors so great and powerful. One of the notices claimed: "Anything that Mr. Anderson writes towers above the dozens of inept, tasteless, empty plays that are produced every season, many of which receive critical praise and some of which are even box office successes." This statement is one that is most ambiguous and very misleading. Anything that Mr. Anderson writes is important since he has proven himself one of the American theatre's most important figures, but that does not preclude one's taking exception to an inferior work—even from the pen of Mr. Anderson.

*Truckline Cafe* is set in a diner on the ocean highway between Los Angeles and San Francisco. Into the diner, Mr. Anderson has brought about thirty characters who reflect the confusion, the pathos and the humor of the times. It is a device which has been used in the drama to great effect in the past. Given a spot to which representatives of all levels of the strata of society might come, the next step is to bring them there. Too many of the habitues of *Truckline Cafe* seem to come upon the scene merely because the playwright wanted to have them speak to the audience. One misses the strong motive which brought the characters to the tenement beneath the Brooklyn Bridge in Mr. Anderson's *Winterset*. As most will recall the trial and execution of Mio's father affected all the lives of the people in the play, and all of them came together in this particular place at this particular point of time for a very definite reason. One could not expect every play—even of Maxwell Anderson's—to rank with *Winterset*, but this one is too far below the earlier play not to protest at it. Ours is a confused day and the characters of the play do reflect the confusion, but there their contribution ends. Not one of them offers a solution or throws any light toward a possible solution. Not one of them seems to offer any resistance to the confusion and the helplessness that engulfs them all about.

The leading roles were played by Virginia Gilmore and Richard Waring. The former as a waitress in the diner, the latter a veteran look-

## In the Offing

*Candida*, a revival of Bernard Shaw's famous play by Katharine Cornell, with Sir Cedric Hardwicke, Wesley Addy, Marlon Brando and Mildred Natwick in the supporting cast. Miss Cornell is to run *Candida* in repertory with the current production of *Antigone*.

*Woman Bites Dog*, a new comedy by Sam and Bella Spewack, the authors of *Clear All Wires* and *Boy Meets Girl*. *Othello*, a production under the auspices of the Equity-Library Project of Shakespeare's tragedy, with P. Jay Sidney in the title role. Mr. Sidney has also directed the production.

ing over the world's prospects, found momentary happiness and ease in being together. Ralph Theodore, June Walker, David Manners, Karl Malden, Leila Ernst and Joan Dolan enacted some of the remaining roles. Mr. Clurman directed, and the setting was designed by Boris Aronson. *Truckline Cafe* will be remembered chiefly as the signal for another round in the fight between the producers and the critics, and not as one of Maxwell Anderson's outstanding contributions to the theatre.

## Three to Make Ready

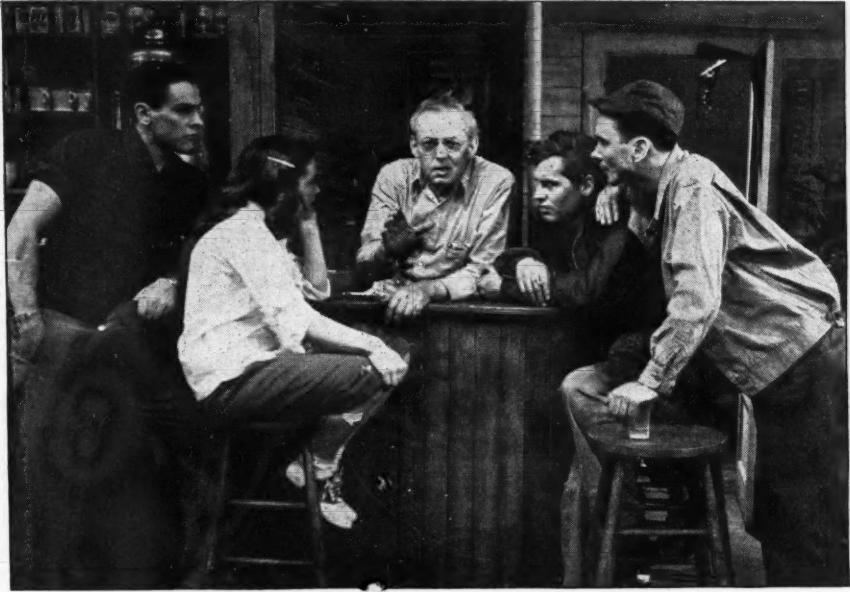
THE month's gayest offering is undoubtedly the revue, *Three to Make Ready* which stars Ray Bolger. This is the third of the series of musicals which began with *One for the Money* and continued with *Two for the Show*. Once again Nancy Hamilton has written the sketches and lyrics, and Brenda Forbes is on hand to carry a large burden of the acting assignment. Ray Bolger is starred in the revue and, though he may not be in evidence enough to satisfy the large numbers of Bolger fans, he figures prominently in many of the individual sketches. The non-musical numbers (except for Miss Forbes' specialties) are the weakest items in the show. In "Cold Water Flat," Mr. Bolger is called upon to generate humor from an outmoded plumbing fixture and the effect leaves one just about as cold as it leaves Mr. Bolger. In "The Shoe on the Other Foot," though abetted by Miss Forbes, he is called upon again to little effect.

Both Brenda Forbes and Ray Bolger, however, stop the show with their own particular numbers. As a daffy matron in "The Story of the Opera" (a return item from the earlier *One for the Money*), Miss Forbes is a riot of fun. Over hurried meal, she attempts to relate the plot of the entire Niebelungen Ring Cycle to her companion. The effect can well be imagined. Mr. Bolger bursts forth as a vaudevillian recounting that "when he and his Alice danced at the Palace they did 'The Old Soft Shoe'." It is a mellow, charming little sequence that is sure to delight the entire audience.

The most spectacular items of the revue are a Gay Nineties vignette, "Barnaby Beach" and "Wisconsin or Kenosha Canoe". The latter depends largely for its humor upon a knowledge of the Messrs. Rodgers' and Hammerstein's *Oklahoma* and *Carousel*. It is, at times, excellent satire and, again, quite dull. The idea behind the sketch is to present how Theodore Dreiser's *An American Tragedy* would appear if Richard Rodgers and Oscar Hammerstein II were to employ it as the basis for a musical comedy. Like *Three to Make Ready* as a whole, the sketch is bumpy and not of an excellence throughout. Others in the large cast include: Arthur Godfrey, the radio commentator; Rose Ingraham, Bibi Osterwald, Jane Deering, Gordon MacRae, Harold Lang and Garry Davis. The music has been written by Morgan Lewis. Margaret Webster staged the sketches; Robert Sidney, the musical and dance numbers. The production was devised and staged by John Murray Anderson.

## I Like It Here

ONE of the most recent of the new productions is *I Like It Here*, a comedy by A. B. Shiffren. This is another in the time-honored tradition of the advent into a trouble-laden household of a all-wise and understanding spirit. In a remarkably brief space of time all of the members of the family find themselves confiding in the newcomer and the latter, in turn, works complete changes in



A scene from Maxwell Anderson's controversial *Truckline Cafe*, which played briefly at the Belasco Theatre. Ralph Theodore, center, is describing an incident of his life to Virginia Gilmore and some of the cafe habitues. Setting by Boris Aronson.

character and situation to bring about a happy conclusion.

In the present instance Willie Kringle, a fellow of rather hazy background, comes into the household of Sebastian Merriweather, a genial New Englander. His wife, Matilda, is greatly concerned lest the daughter, Laura, marry the wrong one of her many suitors. In the course of a little more than three months, Willie straightens out all of the Merriweather problems, and is about ready to go out again into the world to bring his beneficence to other trouble-laden families.

Oscar Karlweis, who plays Willie Kringle, has a charm and warmth that sweeps away all resistance and coldness one might feel toward him. If we must continue to clutter up the stage with such characters, Karlweis is definitely the man to play the role—except that all the sugary sweetness is bound to make him ill after very little time. Bert Lytell plays Mr. Merriweather effortlessly. Beverly Bayne and Mardi Bryant enact the ladies of the household, and William Terry and Donald Randolph are the suitors. Seth Arnold contributes an amusing characterization as a prospective hired hand. Charles K. Freeman directed, but the script was too much for any of the talents employed to bring it to life.

#### Little Brown Jug

**L**ITTLE BROWN JUG was another of the late season's disastrous events. Marie Baumer's play related how a psychopathic rustic blackmailed the Haskells of Connecticut into taking him into their family circle. One is not sure just exactly what the drama lacked, but at no time could one believe in the events or the characters involved. Any attempt at building a mood or creating suspense was forestalled by the inept handling of the situation and the lack of sustained characterization. One could, indeed, dislike the villain and sympathize with the heroine, but a well-drawn play must have greater gradation and more subtlety than that. Percy Kilbride, Katherine Alexander, Arthur Margeson and Marjorie Lord played the leads. *Little Brown Jug*

was directed by Gerald Savory.

#### On Strivers' Row

**S**EVERAL miles from the Times Square district, at their playhouse on West 126th Street, the American Negro Theatre has presented *On Strivers' Row*. This play is written by the director of the American Negro Theatre, Abram Hill. This play has been produced previously by the A. N. T., and many of the cast played in the original production. Incidentally, another of the American Negro Theatre productions, *Walk Hard*, is currently being done at the Chanin Theatre atop one of the midtown skyscrapers in a slightly revised form.

*On Strivers' Row* is a comedy about a family of social climbers and their attempts at appearing wealthy and cultured. While the majority of the cast are capable; a few exhibit great inexperience, and tend to bring a note of amateurishness to the production. It is not the technically perfect and well acted theatre piece that is *Anna Lucasta*. Neither as drama nor as a production does the more recent production equal the mark set by the American Negro Theatre with their production of the Philip Yordan success.

#### Old Vic Company

**A**N EVENT of the greatest importance is scheduled for early May, and one for which I must make space in this article. Theatre Incorporated, the new non-profit organization which produced the current revival of Shaw's *Pygmalion*,

#### Seattle Junior Programs Makes Awards

**F**IRST prize in the latest playwriting contest sponsored by the Seattle Junior Programs, Inc., was awarded to *Snow Treasure*, by Beatrice Lewis, while second and third place honors respectively went to *Hop O' My Thumb*, by Aurand Harris, and to *Under the Hawthorne Tree*, by Susan Welty.

#### HEDGEROW

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Write: 203 Fuller Building  
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is bringing to this country the famous Old Vic Company of London. Most of us know of the work and something of the history of this organization. Old Vic is the name that has come to be used for the old Victoria Theatre, which is across the Thames from Westminster. Until very recently, the theatre was managed by Lillian Baylis, who molded and set its present policy. Of late, the theatre has been adopted as a national institution and, as such, is in the vanguard of a movement that we hope is soon to get under way in these United States.

Every season a group of the established West End stage stars, agree to devote their activity to work at the Old Vic. This means that for that season they will work for a much smaller salary than they could command in the West End theatres, but that they will be given an opportunity to play the roles that the commercial managers are not willing and equipped to run a risk of producing for fear of financial loss. The company is composed of young actors and students of the art, whose experience is vastly enriched by their work with the great of the English theatre. It is, in short, a perfect arrangement.

The acting company is to be headed on this American visit by Dame Sybil Thorndike, Laurence Olivier, Ralph Richardson, and Nicholas Hannen. All of these people are well known to American audiences both through previous stage experiences and through the films. It has been too long since all of them were seen on the New York stage. The repertory is to include four changes of bill: Parts I and II of Shakespeare's *King Henry IV*, a double bill composed of Sophocles' *Oedipus Rex* and Sheridan's *The Critic* and Chekhov's *Uncle Vanya*. This is an event of the greatest magnitude, and present indications show that the company will be well received. There has been quite a schedule of theatre shifting to ensure playing space for the company. Advance orders for tickets have been pouring into the offices of Theatre Incorporated for some time. It does prove that the theatre-going public has a standard of values and that the good productions do not need to resort to exploitation and chicanery to obtain audiences.

**T**HE theatrical season 1945-46, is just about to come to a close. As we balance, the books and wind up the accounts (trying to find the cause for this and that deficiency), let us remind ourselves again of our duty as audience. Although the old axiom that an audience gets just that kind of theatre which it deserves is not the whole truth; it has much validity. Let us at least develop our theatrical taste and appreciation so that our side of the situation cannot be impugned. It appears that just at this moment the theatre is on the point of a very important development. Upon the outcome depends the entire future of the art for this country at least.

# *Staging the Play of the Month*

This department is designed to assist directors, teachers, and students choose, cast, and produce plays of recognized merit. Suggestions concerning plays which readers should like to see discussed here will be welcomed.

Edited by EARL W. BLANK

Director of Dramatics, Berea College, Berea, Kentucky

## The Admirable Crichton

(As produced and directed by William C. de Mille at the University of Southern California)

Article by

EVADNA MITCHELL BLACKBURN

Technical Director for *The Admirable Crichton*

*The Admirable Crichton*. Comedy in four acts, by Sir James Barrie. 11 women, 13 men. English costumes, 1900. Two interiors, one exterior. Royalty, \$37.50. Samuel French, 25 West 45th St., New York.

### Suitability

WITH patriotic millionairesses punching machines beside former servants and capable young battle officers commanding past employers, our recent national crisis has created many laughable situations and has lent a new poignancy to that always stimulating and delightful comedy, *The Admirable Crichton*. The theoretically democratic Lord Loam and his autocratically-minded butler both face with disconcerting suddenness the problem of their relative social position in an upset society. "There must always be a master and servants," says Crichton; but the situations contrived by Barrie, like the "vissitudes of an outraged fortune" make a world as upsetting and laughable, as perplexing and dramatic as only a shipwrecked world can be.

*The Admirable Crichton* is a challenging play to both actors and technicians but not too difficult for capably directed amateurs who are willing to give long

hours toward a coordinated production. It offers opportunity to large groups wishing to give oncoming actors a chance to participate. The main action of the play can be carried by ten of the stronger actors, while less experienced members can be worked into the fourteen bit parts of Act I. Though the technical difficulties are many, they can be managed on small, poorly equipped stages if the technical staff plans carefully.

### Plot

Lord Loam, the head of an aristocratic English family, demonstrates his pet belief in the equality of man by forcing his daughters, Agatha, Catherine, and Lady Mary to entertain the servants monthly, treating them as social equals. This is as distasteful to the servants as it is to the daughters; and it is especially so to his butler, Crichton, whose ideal is a "haughty, aristocratic English house with every one kept in his place." In fact, when forced to give his opinion the butler openly disagrees with Lord Loam by stating that the division into classes is not artificial but natural and therefore right.

At one of these meetings his Lordship announces his intention to take his daughters on a trip around the world. As a demonstration of his democracy he limits the family to two servants: Crichton, the butler, for himself and his two guests; and Tweeny, a kitchen maid, for his three daughters.

After a two-months voyage the yacht is wrecked on a south sea island, where his Lordship and family are faced with the problems of jungle survival. A harsh nature quickly poses the question of leadership. Because of his char-

### Evadna Blackburn

Mrs. Blackburn was introduced to the readers of this Department through her articles on the staging of *LADIES IN RETIREMENT* and *THE CRADLE SONG* published in this magazine during the 1944-45 season. In this issue she brings us another play which, this time, was staged at the University of Southern California under the direction of William C. de Mille. Mrs. Blackburn, upon receiving her B. A. degree from Berea College, attended the University of Southern California where she received her M. A. degree and where she now holds the positions of Technical Director of the University Theatre and an Instructorship in the newly formed Department of Drama.

acter, ability and skill, Crichton is forced to take the position of master, and those less capable ultimately become his willing servants. After two years Crichton is as all-powerful in this new society as was Lord Loam in England. A reversal of the old class system has appeared as a natural outgrowth of the situation. In its wake new evaluations aided by the spell of a tropic sky cause Lady Mary to forget her English suitor, Lord Brocklehurst, and to fall madly in love with the admirable Crichton. Ernest finds his affections turning from Agatha to the servant Tweeny. Spurred by pride and love, Mary becomes a most accomplished huntress and finally receives a proposal of marriage from Crichton. Then with all a man might hope for just within his grasp Crichton faces the most crucial decision of his life. A ship is passing in the distance, a ship that can take them all back to England, where Crichton will again become the perfect butler and Lord Loam a lion in the House of Peers. Against Mary's wishes he sets off signal flares which attract the passing ship. Soon they are all back in England, where, unlike King Edward, the high-born Mary and Ernest see fit to transfer their affections to persons of suitable rank. Even his democratic Lordship post haste transfers his political allegiance to the Tories.

### Casting

As in any serious production the director must exercise care in making his assignments. Good contrasts in physical build, color and personality always help to inject life into any performance. Such contrasts are especially important in casting the three sisters, since they play most of their scenes together.

Crichton is the role of first consideration. Through his clothes of servitude we first see power and mastery. But under a different sky we must add the romantic appeal of a matinee idol combined with the resourcefulness of a Robinson Crusoe. Lord Loam, too, has his double role. He is the conventional pompous English peer, determined in his views and inconsiderate in his demands. Shorn of this dignity he is just a pitiful old man dependent upon society for his wants. The three daughters are of different types. Lady Mary is a beautiful haughty creature, the envy of her two languid sisters. Removed to the island the three daughters of royalty present a unique picture. Vieing with the former kitchen maid, Tweeny, for the affections of Crichton, Agatha and Catherine take to fishing, while Lady Mary becomes a master with the bow and arrow. Little



Act II from *The Admirable Crichton* as staged at the University of Southern California and described by Mrs. Blackburn.

Tweeny makes a helpless appearance in the London drawing room, but in the more primitive set-up she is not outclassed. Her island suitor, Ernest, is described by Barrie as a selfish dandy. Removed to a society where prowess, not social position, is triumphant, Ernest fails to impress even Tweeny. The last member of the shipwrecked party is the cleric, Treherne. Though not clever he is possessed of good sound judgment and sincerity.

Both Lady Brocklehurst and her son, Lord Brocklehurst, are good character parts. She is the typical society snob, dominant and selfish. Her son is a weakling, a nobody but for his title. The servant roles, too, supply excellent chances for character acting and give variety in types.

#### Direction

Barrie offers little technical help to the director beyond suggesting mood and general movement. Detailed business, settings and group arrangements are left to the director and his staff. Full of thought provoking situations which tend to drag a play, the director must be alert to keep the picture moving steadily, building and pointing each scene to its climax and then moving rapidly into the next without giving the audience time to think until after it leaves the theatre. Though serious in general tone, humor is abundant in the story if contrasts are fully developed and the characterizations well drawn.

Close cooperation with the technical staff is especially important in this play. Much depends upon correctly mastered lighting cues, well timed sound effects and quick, orderly scene shifts.

#### Set Problems

The action of the play takes place in three strongly contrasting settings: a lord's drawing room, a jungle clearing, and an island cabin interior. For the first scene we suggested the drawing room through the use of one unit. A massive period door set up center between two huge pylons gave importance to Crichton's post. A brown velvet cyclorama marked the limits of this room.

Of the three settings the island scene demanded the greatest ingenuity. We began with bamboo, since it is very plentiful in this area. However, reeds, cattails, or painted rows could be used effectively. Three wagons made of 2"x12" lumber ten feet long and mounted on heavy casters formed the basis for the jungle effect. Fully a month before production the bamboo was fireproofed, sprayed with blue-green paint, and mounted in front of irregular flats which in turn were fastened upright on the narrow wagons. (Sand bags weighted the wagons on stage to avoid the danger of tipping.) Then, just before opening night a profusion of wilt-resistant foliage was tied to the front of these wagons. The two sides of the hut were made of split bamboo, folded for convenience in moving and storing. The foundation of the mountain was two irregular flats held in a triangular position with cross bracing. Over the braces we tacked chicken wire in irregular folds. The next step was to cover the wire with many layers of pasted papers. Finally, the whole was painted with splotches of color to make what Professor de Mille called a mountain geologically impossible but dramatically effective. When mounted on casters this rolled on stage easily. Similarly, the steps hidden behind the mountain were on

casters. Even the trunk of the palm tree was made to roll into place. A drop border of palms hooked to the teaser batton, two self braced ground rows for maskings, several practical rocks around a camp fire, and the picture was complete.

The interior of the island home was easily constructed. Nevertheless, a lot of hands and time were needed to build the props, for it must be remembered that in the play the only tools available save the few rescued from the ship were the crudely forged instruments from Crichton's shop. No fabrics had yet been woven. This means skins, grasses or bamboo must substitute. In our locale dried bamboo served for the screen which divided the kitchen from the rest of the room. It also made effective window and door shutters. Grasses could serve the same purpose. Skins over the barrel furniture and dried foods on the log painted walls added color to the whole.

Though the play can be staged without elaborate equipment, one essential item is a dimmer that can provide gradual blackouts. With limited spots a few can be made to play double duty. We changed the filters and the focus of several between acts. To avoid error each was staged with written directions.

#### Costume and Make-up

*The Admirable Crichton* is best staged in its period, around 1900. The London ladies are richly dressed in lovely colors. The servants in contrast are simply clothed in neat apparel befitting their stations. On the island skins become the fashion of the day.

The biggest problem in make-up is to quickly change from straights to all-over tropical tans. This can be speeded up if the body make-up for Act III is applied earlier, leaving the face and neck to be done between acts. Liquid make-up can be used quite satisfactorily for this, since it is less apt to rub off on the clothing. However, care should be taken to be sure the grease paint and the leg make-up blend.

#### Educational Value

Though rich in romance and adventure *The Admirable Crichton* turns a keen analytical eye on the English class system and bares it by means of revealing situations quite devoid of long winded speeches. Indeed, *The Admirable Crichton* is prophetic and offers a key to the understanding of class changes in a war torn England.

Barrie shows us a class of people who in easy times are proud of their hereditary masters, but who in a crisis find them too inefficient. Only the pressure of an emergency causes due credit to be given to character and ability. Ironically the great "Democrat," Lord Loam, quickly becomes a Tory reactionary when he sees that his democratic ideas endanger his special privileges.

But the educational value of this play is not confined to a clearer understanding of the English social structure. The penetrating insight into character, the whimsical and graceful expression, the expert exploitation of exciting situations all make the production of this play a fruitful experience in the appreciation of human, literary, and dramatic values.

October Issue: *Ramshackle Inn*

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## The Technician's Roundtable

Conducted by A. S. GILLETTE  
Technical Director, University Theatre, State  
University of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa

**Question:** We are giving *The Tower Room Mystery* and would like to have cobwebs. We have just heard that there is a cobweb-making machine. Can you give us any information about such, the rental or purchase cost?

**Answer:** There may be such a machine on the market but I doubt if the use you would make of it would warrant either its purchase cost or rental. This is particularly true since you can make first-class cobwebs with such simple materials as two small blocks of wood and a little glue. Cut two pieces of 1" x 4" into 6" lengths. Partly cover the face of one block with glue and allow it to dry until it is tacky. Place the second block over the first and twist from side to side to distribute the glue evenly between the faces of each block. Now separate the blocks slowly, the glue will adhere to both forming numerous threads that may be stretched out until the blocks are as far apart as one can reach. Drape these glue threads about in any manner you wish. Even under close inspection they are hard to distinguish from real cobwebs.

**Question:** We have a peculiar problem in connection with shifting the settings for our next production. The scene is an exterior that is backed across the center rear by a high wall. We want to fly this wall but this leaves the pipe batten and the steel cables by which it's flown within sightlines. We can unfasten the scenery from the batten but the wall is too high to reach the hanger irons without the aid of a ladder and this would slow up the shift noticeably. Is there some trick to do this in a hurry that we are overlooking?

**Answer:** This sounds as though your stage is equipped with a counterweight system. If it is, and you are considering reflying the empty batten, perhaps you'll accept a word of warning. It is not safe to unfasten scenery from a counterweighted batten without resorting to some special rigging that will balance or control the loaded arbor that is left unbalanced by the removal of the scenery. Perhaps the easiest way to do this is by attaching a sandbag of equal weight with the scenery to the batten before unsnapping your backwall.

High scenery, in a vertical position, can be fastened or unfastened from a batten both rapidly and easily by the use of a special rigging by a stagehand working at floor level. This consists of two or more long snatch lines of  $\frac{3}{8}$ " rope with heavy harness hooks tied on the lower ends that can be snapped onto the rings of hook hanger irons attached to the lower rails

of the scenery. A special home-made strap iron hook replaces the usual hanger irons at the top of the flats. The snatch lines are looped behind the hooks in the same manner that a lash line is thrown around a lash cleat. Be sure to place the hook slightly out of vertical alignment with the points where the snatch lines are attached to the batten and scenery. As the lines tighten to lift the scenery they are pulled tightly against the heel of the hooks with no chance of coming loose until the lines are slackened.

**Question:** Is there some substitute for nose putty? None of the stores in our town carry it and we haven't time to order it from New York.

**Answer:** This will undoubtedly bring howls of anguish from specialists in make-up, but I used it last summer in a camp show when nothing else was available. I found some glazier's putty that had dried out a little but which was still pliable enough to be worked. I covered my nose with spirit gum and allowed it to dry. This prevented either oil or perspiration from loosening the putty once it had been applied. I was quite surprised to find how easily this putty could be covered by the usual grease paint and powder. The only disadvantage that I could see was that it was a trifle heavy, but then this was a very large nose and it seemed a small price to pay for an item that was the hit of the show.

**Question:** Some of the scenery we are altering has been joined by corrugated fasteners and we've been unable to remove them without splitting the wood. Have you any suggestion how this can be done?

**Answer:** This is not too easy to do and I cannot guarantee that you will have 100% success with the method I'm about to suggest. Place a small block of 1" x 3" with its edge parallel with the joint and under but one of the members. Strike the unsupported member with a hammer until the corrugator pulls free. Now place the head of a second rip hammer on the floor and rest the exposed half of the corrugator between the claws. By striking the wood gently at first and then with increasing force the corrugator can usually be removed without breaking it in two. Should the fastener break in two the imbedded half may sometimes be dug out with the aid of a nail puller.

The only time that corrugated fasteners are used in our shop is in the construction of some unit of scenery that is not likely to be used again or altered.

**Question:** I have seen commercial stage productions in which acts were presented with the help of ultra-violet light and fluorescent dyes. Could you tell us what chemicals can be used, the type of cloth to be dyed and the method of dyeing?

**Answer:** There are two types of chemicals used in creating the effects you seem interested in producing. One is the fluorescent compounds which under normal lighting appear as ordinary colors but when stimulated by ultra-violet light on a darkened stage will glow radiantly. The second type is the so-called blackout paint,

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a mixture that does not require the use of ultra-violet filters or special spotlights. This paint needs only to be stimulated by brilliant stage lighting in order to glow in a most satisfactory manner after all lights on the stage have been blacked out. This blackout paint comes in but one color which appears as a very light cream color under artificial light but which glows in the dark as a light green.

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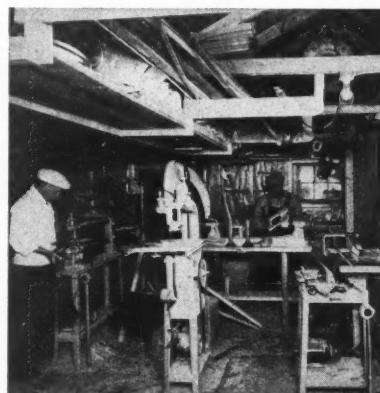
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# On the High School Stage

News items published in this department are contributed by schools affiliated with

## The National Thespian Society

### Kenmore, N. Y.

THE all-school play, *Arsenic and Old Lace*, given on November 2, marked the opening of major dramatic productions for this season at the Kenmore High School (Troupe 108), with Miss Eve Strong as director and Troupe sponsor. Members of the Dramatics I class presented scenes from several plays at a school assembly held on January 11. Thespians followed with a one-act Chinese play entitled *Thrice Promised Bride*, given on February 4 in observance of National Drama Week. Students were especially pleased with this play, staged in traditional Chinese manner of acting. Several members of the Troupe attended the performance of *Damask Cheek* at the Studio Theatre in Buffalo. A former member of the Troupe, Richard Chelius, appeared in the performance.

### Cheyenne, Wyo.

MEMBERS of Troupe 370 of the Cheyenne High School presented a program of four one-act plays on March 15 as their latest major contribution to the dramatics program. The playbill consisted of *Idylings of the King*, *Town Hall Tonight*, *Nobody Sleeps*, and *The Valiant*. Plays were presented under the supervision of Troupe sponsor Marian M. Sout. Thespians were also responsible for a pantomime show

and impersonations given on February 8, 23 and March 6. Dramatics club meetings are given to a study of make-up, stagecraft, and pantomimes. Cheyenne dramatics students took first place at the Colorado Speech Conference held on November 17 and at the Speech Conference held on November 17 and at the Speech Conference held at Cheyenne later. *Junior Miss* was presented on December 7, 8 by the Junior Class as the first full-length play of the current season.

### Albion, Mich.

MISS LEITHA V. PERKINS, Thespian regional director for Michigan and director of dramatics at the Washington Gardner High School (Troupe 53) reports that the district drama festival this season is tentatively scheduled for May 4 at the Marshall High School, with Mrs. Bess Murray in charge. Six schools are expected to participate in this event. Dramatics students at Washington Gardner opened their current season with the all-school play, *Jumpin' Jupiter*, on Noevmber 16. An audience of some 800 attended the performance. Another full house greeted the performance of *That Girl Patsy* staged by the Junior Class on February 1. The Thespian play is tentatively scheduled for production on April 26. The year's dramatics program has resulted in qualifying twenty-six new members as Thespians.

### Perryton, Texas

SEVENTEEN charter members established Thespian Troupe 527 at the Perryton High School late in the fall term, with Miss Inez Franz as director of dramatics and Troupe sponsor. The event was observed with an impressive ceremony, with the following students taking the Thespian pledge: Rosa Lee Reed, Jimmie Key, Kay Kizziar, Richard Morgan, Barbara Pletcher, J. C. Jones, Ruth Wade, Mina Phagan, Marjorie Hummer, Jim Bill Dodson, Barbara Buckley, Keith Bray, Nettie MacBrillhart, Ara Nell Gann, Mildred Sager, Don Stephenson, and Veva Joe Mitchell. Soon after the Troupe was formally established, Thespians began rehearsals for a bill of three one-act plays consisting of *The Valiant*, *Suppressed Desires*, and *Mooncalf Mugford*.—Barbara Pletcher, Secretary.

### Hendersonville, N. C.

NATIONAL DRAMA week was observed at Fassifern School for Girls (Troupe 145) February 9 in a special assembly program by members of the class in play production under the direction of Estelle Elliott, speech arts instructor and troupe sponsor. Miss Elliott, in introducing the program, explained the purpose of National Drama week and called attention to the fact that people of the theatre, no exception to men in all walks of life, have always turned to the Scriptures for inspiration and guidance. She cited the Song of Solomon as the source of some of our outstanding dramatic titles; namely, *Song of Songs*, *The Little Foxes*, *The Voice of the Turtle*, and *Our Vines Have Tender Grapes*. Broadway plays reviewed through verbal reports and recordings included: *The Glass Menagerie*, *Carousel*, *The Magnificent Yankee*, *O Mistress Mine*, *Pygmalion*, *Show Boat*, *The Rugged Path*, and *You Touched Me*. Alice Gerstenberg's *Time for Romance* was produced by the Dramatic Club as the major production of the first semester. In middle March the Speech Arts department under the sponsorship of the Thespian troupe presented an evening's program including choral verse, monologues, and a one-act play.—Ginger Williams, Secretary.

### Northampton, Mass.

THESPIAN TROUPE 411 of the Northampton High School has been enjoying a very full and varied dramatic season under the direction of Miss Ruth E. French, Troupe sponsor. *Hamp Hi-jinks*, an original variety show, was presented October 16 and 17. Two hundred students participated in this original production before packed houses. The Boys' and Girls' Choral Speaking Choir entertained the Northampton Woman's Club, the Armistice Day Student Assembly, and the parents and teachers Education Week with diversified programs incorporating dance, light, and percussion and music as a background for the verse choirs. The first three-act play was a highly colorful, popular presentation of *The Seven Sisters* on December 13 and 14. Under the auspices of the Thespians, thirty members of the Dramatic Club attended the Mount Holyoke College production of *A Midsummer's Night Dream* at South Hadley in December. Thespians were also the guests of the Smith College Dramatic Association at the Marlowe production *The Tragical Historie of Dr. Faustus* which was directed by Dean Hallie Flanagan Davis.

At present try-outs for the annual prize speaking contest are being held and preparations are being made for the initiation of eleven recently nominated members of the Troupe. A three-act play and several one-act plays and assembly programs and the operetta, *The Mikado*, are being presented this spring.—Grace Smith, Secretary.



National Thespian Officers elected at the Columbus, Ohio, convention, December 27-28 (Left to right) standing: Harry T. Leeper, Trustee; Barbara Wellington, National Director; Marion Stuart, Senior Councilor; Blanford Jennings, Assistant National Director. Seated: Ernest Bavel, Secretary-Treasurer; Jean E. Donahey, Senior Councilor; Earl W. Blank, Trustee; Paul F. Opp, Trustee.

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### Oxford, Alabama

THESPIAN Troupe 663 was formally installed in March at the Calhoun County High School, with Mrs. Frank Butenschon as founder and sponsor and the following students as charter members: Joe Cassidy, Merl Hayes, Helen Jones, Walter Jones, Ann Kerr, Margaret Ann McNaron, Everett Phillips, Herbert Rice, Harry Sherman, Maggie Sprayberry, Edwin Truitt, and Louise Williams. Following the ceremony, the new members were entertained with a luncheon given by Mrs. Butenschon. The group was addressed briefly by Mr. H. T. Stanford, principal. The new Troupe has already made plans for various projects associated with the dramatics program of the school.

### Tuscola, Ill.

THE present dramatics season at the Tuscola Community High School (Thespian Troupe 180) has been an extremely interesting one, according to a report from Miss Thelma Grumbles, Troupe sponsor. Thespians opened the season with a performance of *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court*, on November 9. The Juniors followed with a performance of *Two Gentlemen and Vernon* on January 11. The third major play of the year, *And Came the Spring* was given on April 26. Among the one-acts given during the season were *A Made-to-Order Christmas* and *A Lucky Accident*, both plays being staged by Thespians. The entire Troupe traveled to Champaign, Illinois, to see performances of *Three Gentlemen On a Horse* and *King Lear* at the University of Illinois.—Betty Carrell, Secretary.

### Mt. Vernon, Ind.

THE production of *The Five Little Peppers* on November 14, 15, opened the current drama season at the Mount Vernon High School (Thespian Troupe 116), with Miss Catherine L. Howard directing. The Music Department

gave *Hansel and Gretel* on February 28 as the second major performance of the season. The third full-length production, *The Fighting Littles*, was staged by the Senior Class on April 24, 25. *Junior's Mustache*, *No Room at the Inn* and *If Women Worked as Men Do* were among the one-acts presented for school purposes by the Footlight Performers. Club meetings were devoted to a study of stage techniques and make-up reports based upon articles published in DRAMATICS MAGAZINE. Dramatic students were also represented with a play in the drama festival held at the Indiana State Teachers College of Terre Haute.—Jean Davis, Secretary.

### Alton, Ill.

THE dramatic season of the Alton High School (Troupe 126) was opened on October 25 with a performance of *Don't Take My Penny*. *Tish*, a play adapted from the novel by Mary Roberts Rinehart, proved a big success with the audience on March 29. The mid-term graduates gave a production of *Letters to Lucifer* with considerable popular success. The June graduating class is scheduled to present *Ramshackle Inn* on May 24. Thespians Donna Hirtman and Carol Beth Robertson were student directors for a one-act play, *Antic Spring*, presented before student assembly audiences. An impressive ceremony for the induction of new Thespians was held on January 4, under the direction of Miss Mildred Rutledge, dramatics director. The ceremony closed with the announcement that Imogene Trout had been awarded the honor of "Best Thespian" for the season.—Donna Hirtman, Troupe President.

### Saint Martin, Ohio

THE present semester of dramatic events at the School of the Brown County Ursulines (Thespian Troupe 668) opened on February 17 with a production of *St. Germaine of the Wolf Country*, a dramatization based upon Henri

Gheon's story of his own drama, *La Bergere au Plays des Loups*. The play was presented by the Dramatic Club. An equally impressive performance of the choric drama, *Jeanne D'Arc*, was presented on April 14. Dramatic activities are under the direction of Sister Miriam, founder and sponsor of the Thespian Troupe at this school. Other dramatic events for the remainder of the semester will include the initiation of new Thespian members.

### Clay, W. Va.

MEMBERS of Troupe 458 of the Clay County High School, with Jane B. Harris as sponsor, have given two major plays this spring. On March 6, 7, they offered a production of the comedy, *Margery Is Eighteen*, and on April 24 they presented a performance of *Don't Take My Penny*. Both plays were well received. Other plays presented this season are: *Get Acquainted* (October 24) and *Wise Freshman*, both one-acts given for classroom purposes. Twenty students have so far qualified for Thespian membership this season.

### Port Clinton, Ohio

THE Port Clinton High School Thespian Troupe 442 opened the 1945-46 season with a production of the all-school play, *Brother Goose*, with Miss Katherine Barber and Mr. Albert Rafhar directing. This performance resulted in nine students having sufficient qualifications for Thespian membership. A formal initiation for these students was held on January 29 in the school auditorium. In February, Thespians gave a one-act, *Papa Said No*, at the school assembly in observance of National Drama Week. Several Thespians had major roles in the production of the Junior play, *Don't Take My Penny*, staged on April 4, 5. The final play of the season, *Drama of Death*, will be presented on May 3, 4, with the Senior Class sponsoring the production.—Gladys Durlbert, Secretary.

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### Danville, Va.

THE present season in dramatics at the George Washington High School (Troupe 605) will close with a record of four major productions, several one-act plays, a number of radio programs, and a variety of other events, giving students one of the most active seasons in the history of the school. The first major play of the year, *The House of Seven Gables*, was given on November 15. On February 7 came the production of *Nine Girls*. On March 26 the Senior Class followed with a production of *Footloose*. The fourth play, *Angel Street*, will be presented in May under sponsorship of the Dramatics Class. Among the one-acts of the season were *For Whom the Telephone Rings*, *The Gallant Lady*, and *Did You Say Mink?* The weekly radio programs over Station WBTM have carried news and activities pertaining to the school. The extensive program in dramatics offered students was further expanded by at-

tendance at a number of plays given by neighboring schools. Considerable credit for the many achievements in dramatics at this school goes to Regional Director Dorothy Fitzgerald, director of dramatics and Troupe sponsor.

### Cedar Rapids, Iowa

MEMBERS of Troupe 561 of the Roosevelt High School assisted at an impressive installation ceremony for Troupe 684 of the McKinley Senior High School held early this semester. The McKinley Troupe is under the direction of Miss Lucile McKee, director of dramatics. Miss Roberta D. Sheets sponsors the Troupe at the Roosevelt High School and is serving this year as Regional Director for the State of Iowa. Eleven students were formally inducted into the Roosevelt Troupe on March 11. On April 6 Thespians of this school participated in the all-city play festival, with the McKinley High School in the role of host for the participating groups.

### Plant City, Fla.

PLANT City High School (Troupe 5) has offered two major plays this semester: *Every Family Has One* (February 28—March 1) and *A Case of Springtime* (March 28, 29). Directors were D. E. Bailey, Jr. and Mrs. Glenn Wright, respectively. The present school term also included two performances of a Gay Nineties Revue on February 19, 21, presented by the Speech Department with the assistance of the band and glee club. The present season has also seen the presentation of several one-acts for school purposes. Among these plays were *The Soft-Hearted Ghost, Her Fatal Beauty, Teen Age Magic, and Three Pills in a Bottle*. The school was represented in the drama festival held on March 8, 9, at Deland, Fla. Plans were being made at the time of this report for performances of an evening of one-act plays on April 25, 26. Thespian activities at this school are sponsored by Mrs. William Emery Calvert.



Cast for the musical show, *Down Argentine Way*, given at the William Penn Senior High School (Thespian Troupe 520), York, Pa. Directed by Leon C. Miller.

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NELLIE McCASLIN

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**Middletown, N. Y.**

THESPians of the Middletown High School Troupe 74 provided a large part of the cast for the production of *Headin' Hollywood*, given to full houses on February 13, 14. Fine acting, realistic scenery, colorful costumes, and an abundance of delightful songs combined to make the play a success. The week before the production of this play, Thespians and other dramatics students observed National Drama Week with a variety of events. Students with outstanding records in dramatic work were chosen to accompany Sponsor Miles McLain to New York City for a performance of the GI version of *Hamlet* with Maurice Evans in the title role. Another event of National Drama Week was the presentation of the one-act play, *Ladies of the Mop*. The season's activities in dramatics resulted in thirty-seven students qualifying for membership in the Junior Thespian organization. Eight other students were accepted for membership in Troupe 74 at an informal ceremony held on February 28. Director McLain is offering a dramatics program with wide appeal to students. The response is most enthusiastic.—Ann C. Burnett, Secretary.

**Miami, Fla.**

MEMBERS of Thespian Troupe 327 of Miami Senior High School have had another busy dramatics season with the production of two three-act plays, *It's All In Your Head* and *Juno Mad*. In assembly, and in the school's Little Theater, have been given such successful one-act plays as *More Blessed*, *The Last of the Jones*, *The Flattering World*, *Leave It To Joe* and *Two Gentlemen of the Bench*, with members of the Dramatics Club and Thes-

pians taking part. Under the direction and guidance of Mrs. Rochelle Williams, further dramatic interest is being sponsored with the anticipation of the State-wide Convention of Thespians to be held in May, with the Miami Thespians acting as host. The one-act play, *The Flattering Word* was entered in the State One-Act Play Festival held at DeLand, March 9th.—Jane Anderson, Secretary.

**Bloomington, Ill.**

MEMBERS of Thespian Troupe 131 of the Bloomington High School assisted with the production of three major plays this season. The first of these, *Quality Street*, was given on November 1, 2. The second play, *Spring Green*, was presented on February 28 and March 1. A third full-length play, *A Murder Has Been Arranged*, will be presented on May 2, 3, with Thespians also assisting. Miss Patricia Weldon is directing this season, with Miss Rilda Betts serving as business manager and Thespian Troupe Sponsor.

**Thief River Falls, Minn.**

TWO major plays, an operetta, several one-act plays, and a number of club meetings devoted to various topics in dramatics, make up the principal events of the present season in dramatics at the Thief River Falls High School (Troupe 508), with Helen Movius directing. The season got underway on November 9 with the Junior class presenting *Don't Take My Penny*. The second major play, *Garden of the Moon*, will be given by the Senior Class on May 6. The operetta, *Rio Rico*, was presented on March 1, with Miss Alma Klawitter directing. Drama Week in February was celebrated with a program of three one-act plays: *Alice's Blue*

*Gown*, *Winter Sunset* and *The Lie That Jack Built*. Two other one-acts, *Sauce for the Gosslings* and *The Whit Phantom*, were given earlier in the year by members of the Speech Class.—Helen Linaland, Secretary.

**Grapeland, Texas**

THESPIAN Troupe 129 was formally established this season at the Grapeland High School, with Mrs. J. C. Shoultz as sponsor and dramatics director. Members of the charter roll are as follows: Felix Dailey, Mattie Lee Darsey, LaWanda Taylor, Danny Walling, Jimmy Spann, Ruth McAnally, Betty Jean Baker, Sam Hill Darsey Anderson, Curtis Lock, and Mary Lou Posey. The first project in which the newly formed Troupe took an active part was the play festival held early in April with the following entries: *Antic Spring*, *Beauty and the Jacobin*, *The Last Page*, *On Vengeance Height*, and *An Economical Boomerang*. Thespians also played an active part in the presentation of the Easter Sunrise Service, *With Christ We Build Anew*. Club meetings are devoted to a study of play production.—LaWanda Taylor, Secretary.

**Deland, Fla.**

SIX schools participated in the drama festival held in March at the John B. Stetson University, with Mildred E. Murphy of Orlando High School acting as chairman for the event. Play entries were as follows: *The Wonder Hat*, *The Flattering Word*, *This Night Shall Pass*, *Sham*, *Finders-Keepers*, *Little Women*, and *It Ain't Done Right by Nell*. Superior rating was awarded to the entries from the Hillsborough High School of Tampa and the Orlando High School. The critic judge, LeRoy Carlson, director of the Jacksonville Little

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Theatre Players, also chose an All-State Cast of the six outstanding players as follows: Manuel Rubin (Hillsborough), Lloyd Cunningham (Plant City), Nancy Grethen (Miami Senior), Elsie McCoy, Suzanne Ferris, and Suzanne Wheeler (Orlando). Seventy-five festival delegates attended the banquet at the close of the plays.

#### Crossville, Tenn.

THE annual drama recital given at the Cumberland County High School (Troupe 428) on March 12 consisted of the following one-act plays: *The Phantom Gentleman*, *Just Women, Which Is the Way to Boston?* *Hard-Boiled*, *Seeing Double*, and *Ladies of the Mop*. Vaughn Swafford served in the capacity of stage manager for the performances, while Miss Ethel Walker, director of dramatics and Thespian Regional director for Tennessee, had general supervision of the event. The festival of plays was open to the public without charge.

#### Dallas, Texas

A VARIETY of dramatic projects are being sponsored this season at the Sunset High School (Troupe 216), with Mrs. Wanda Bunker directing. Dramatic productions given to date include the three-act comedy, *A Little Honey*, given in December by the mid-year graduating class, scenes from *Little Women* given by Thespians at one of the school assemblies in December, and the following one-acts: *Little Darling*, *'Twas the Night Before Christmas*, and *The Lovely Margaret*. The dramatics department has also offered a number of other programs and skits to the school and to groups in Dallas.—Harriet Matlock, Secretary.

#### Hazleton, Pa.

FEW high schools in America today equal or surpass the dramatics program offered this



Scene from a Gay Nineties Revue staged at the Brownsville, Pa., Senior High School (Thespian Troupe 187). Directed by Jean E. Donahey.

season to students of the Hazelton High School (Thespian Troupe 257), with Miss Marian V. Brown as director. So far six major plays have been presented as follows: *Don't Take My Penny* (October 24), *Junior Miss* (November 21), *Murder in Rehearsal* (January 9), *Ladies in Retirement* (February 13), *Don't Keep Him Waiting* (February 27), and *Come Rain or Shine* (March 27). Some of these plays were presented with the cooperation of groups in the community, but members of the dramatics de-

partment took an active part in each. The program of one-acts presented for school purposes has included *Now That April's Here*, *The Elopement*, *Mr. Snoop Is Murdered*, *Aunt Carrie's Christmas Carol*, and *In Doubt About Daisy*. Club meetings are given to a study of Broadway plays and the production of original scripts. This year the Entertainment Bureau has maintained its splendid record for offering school talent to groups in the community.—Lorraine DeJoseph, Secretary.



1. Charter members, Thespian Troupe 601, Arlington Heights High School, Fort Worth, Thespian. Sponsored by Mrs. Mary Sweet Franklin.

2. Scene from a production of *Brother Goose* given under the direction of Philip D. Grout at the Missouri Valley, Iowa, High School (Thespian Troupe 179).

3. Scene from the Senior Class production of *A Little Honey* at the

Newton, Kansas, High School (Thespian Troupe 47). Directed by A. E. Bilger.

4. Two characters in the production of *Papa Is All* at the Dearborn, Michigan, High School (Thespian Troupe 586). Directed by Jessie Church.

5. Members of Thespian Troupe 15 of the Roger Ludlowe High School, Fairfield, Connecticut. Sponsored by Miss May Elizabeth Kelly.

# A Case of Springtime

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W. J. Farma, *Players' Magazine*.

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Members of Thespian Troupe 700 at the Anchorage, Alaska, High School, with Mrs. Eugene Dahl as founder and sponsor.

### Thespian Troupe No. 700 Granted to Anchorage, Alaska, High School

FOR the second time in its history, The National Thespian Society has extended membership to a dramatics group outside continental United States. The first occasion marked the entrance into the Society of Troupe 217 of the Cristobal, Canal Zone, High School. This occurred in October, 1932. On March 6 of this year membership was granted to the Anchorage, Alaska, High School, which entered the Society with a group of nineteen dramatics students under the direction of Mrs. Eugene Dahl.

The application for membership reports a total school enrollment of 229 for the Anchorage High School. Further information on the school situation there is reported by Mrs. Dahl as follows:

"The population has varied from approximately 3,000 in 1935 to more than 10,000 now. Our student body is always changing: young people are going and coming continuously, with the result that in our present senior class of 32 students only about half of them have attended Alaskan schools since the sixth grade. Our school population is very representative of the 'outside'—the Alaskan word for anyone who is not a resident."

Interest in dramatics began last year with a group of Junior grade students staging a successful performance of *The Patsy*, under the leadership of Edith Erickson, Harvey Young, and Mary Carolyn Ralston. This season the same students, with the assistance of others, presented *Don't Take My Penny*, with considerable financial and artistic success. Receipts for two performances totalled about \$550. This season saw also the organization of a dramatics class with an enrollment of nine girls. This group found an ideal play with which to begin its activities, *Nine Girls*, a popular success with many amateur drama groups. Profits from this play will be used to provide a stage set for the Junior class production, *Grand Old Girl*. An exchange of plays is also being planned this spring with the high school at Palmer.

Superintendent of Schools J. Lester Minner and Principal C. E. Peterson are keenly interested in the work being done in dramatics in their school. The formal installation of Troupe 700 has been scheduled for May 3, with arrangements being made by Mrs. Dahl.

We have assured Mrs. Dahl and her students that many Troupes in the United States will want to send congratulatory messages in time to be read at the public ceremony scheduled for May 3. We suggest an air mail letter. Postage rate is the same as in the United States—8 cents.

### Danville, Ill.

A BUSY and successful dramatics program has been enjoyed this season at the Danville High School (Thespian Troupe 59) with Miss Mary Miller directing. The Dramatics Club opened the year's schedule with performances of the one-acts, *The Brave Shall Serve* and *Almost Perfect*, on November 2. Two other one-acts, *Everything's Off* and *Pretty Girl Wanted*, were presented by the same group on November 19. A third set of one-acts, *Time for Everything* and *Where's That Report Card*, was given on March 4. All these performances were presented at dramatics club meeting. The first major play of the season, *The Fighting Littles*, was given on February 14. The Senior Class is scheduled to give the second three-act play, *Come Rain or Shine*, on May 10. Other events of the season included the production, *Moments Musical*, presented by the Music Department on March 28, 29, and a radio program on February 22 over Station WDAN. Meetings of the

dramatics club have been devoted to the presentation of one-act plays and lectures on current Broadway hits, radio techniques, make-up, and "Do's and Don'ts" of Drama.—Regina Daws, Secretary.

### Lakefield, Minn.

DRAMATIC activities for this season at the Lakefield High School (Troupe 641) began with the Junior Class production of the three act comedy, *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court*, presented on November 16. The second major play of the year, *The Imaginary Invalid*, was given by Thespians on March 18. The third play, *Trail of the Lonesome Pine*, was staged by the Senior Class on April 5. The season has also included the performance of two one-act plays, *Bobby Sox* and *Tes Means No*. Thespian activities at this school are sponsored by Mrs. James E. Larsen, dramatics director.—Betty Hartman, Secretary.

## What's New among Books and Plays

### Review Staff:

Mary Ella Bovee, Blanford Jennings, Marion Stuart, Marion V. Brown, Elmer S. Crowley, Robert Ensley, Helen Movius, Roberta D. Sheets.

Reviews appearing in this department aim to help our readers keep up with recent books and plays. Opinions expressed are those of the reviewer only. Mention of a book or play in this department does not constitute an endorsement by DRAMATICS MAGAZINE.

The Dramatic Publishing Co., 59 East Van Buren Street, Chicago, Ill.

*Strictly Formal*, a comedy in three acts, by William Davidson. 6 m., 10 w. Royalty, \$10 to \$25, depending upon door receipts. Mr. Davidson has written a number of popular plays for amateur groups, including such well known hits as *Brother Goose*, *Act Your Age*, and *The Little Honey*. *Strictly Formal*, his latest contribution, will certainly enjoy wide popularity among producing groups, for in this comedy he brings together a pleasing variety of teen-age characters in situations rich with laughter and the stuff of which popular entertainment is made. The story concerns the Cutler family and young people of the neighborhood, several of whom are arranging dates for the Senior dance only eleven days away. The appearance of Marcia, a sophisticated Miss from New York City, and the arrival of movie-minded Cindy from Deucyville, only complicate matters further, but all ends well with the close of the third act. The dialogue is thoroughly plausible; the story is wholesome and fast-moving.—*Ernest Bavelry*.

*A Case of Springtime*, a comedy in 3 acts, by Lee Sherman. 6 m., 9 w. Royalty, \$10. Compared to Bob Parker, Henry Aldrich, Eddie Bracken and the rest are pikers in this business of getting into trouble. Not the kind of trouble that leads to "world wars" but the kind that will get you better than even odds on parental insanity. To begin with Bob is in terrific trouble because he has borrowed the principal's tailcoat to put on for a magic show only to have misfortune visit it . . . along with its owner. And to complicate this situation Bob's best girl's father is the principal. One thing really doesn't lead to another but they all arrive uninvited right down the line to the police and a zoo keeper. The last mentioned proved a highly acceptable visitor, for she not only erases Bob's worst predicament but informs him that his "rabbits" are actually chinchillas worth \$300 a piece and the basement is overrun with them. The play is a blend of comedy, pathos, farce and downright zaniness, not too carefully mixed. Easy, obvious, with several heartwarming scenes and characters.—*Robert W. Ensley*.

The H. H. Wilson Company, 950-972 University Avenue, New York 52, N. Y.

*Educational Film Guide*, published monthly except in May, June, July, and August. Compiled by Dorothy E. Cook and Eva Rahbeck-Smith. Subscription price, \$3.00. For teachers and school administrators who wish to keep up with the latest educational films, this publication is truly indispensable. The Guide gives the titles of the newest films, sales and rental prices, and names and addresses of producers and distributors. Only 16 mm films, sound or silent, are listed. The number of reels and time required to show each film are also indicated. Cumulated issues are available from time to time.

The annual edition, 1945, of *Educational Film Guide* is also available for the price of \$4.00. The volume gives the titles of 4,340 films and a selected, classified and annotated list of 3,540 films. In addition to the wealth of information found in this publication, the buyer will welcome the very fine editorial care with which the book has been prepared.—*Ernest Bavelry*.

Educators Progress Service, Randolph, Wis.

*Educators Guide to Free Films*, compiled and edited by Mary Foley Horkheimer and John W. Differ. Fifth edition, 1945. Price \$4.00. This publication is another invaluable source of timely and helpful information for those educators who make extensive use of films as teaching aids. This volume lists 2,571 free films, 410 of which are 16 mm silent, 559 are 16 mm sound, and the balance 35 mm silent and sound. The latest free films are included, of course. Names of producers and distributors are also given. All titles are carefully arranged, with a subject index. The volume lists a wealth of material for use in the classroom. It deserves a place in every school system.—*Ernest Bavelry*.

Walter H. Baker Company, 178 Tremont Street, Boston 11, Mass.

*Escort Trouble*, a farce in 3 acts, by Eddie Cope. 5 m., 5 w. Royalty, \$10. Tom and his roommate, Bob, are potential business men, but up to their senior year in college the ledger is unbalanced. They have tried advertising, miniature golf, letter writing service, and their present venture is the escort trade. Tom has the ideas and Bob has the money . . . what little they have had. According to all laws of business they have started this escort game at the wrong time: just at the beginning of the spring vacation. Bob MUST graduate to get the \$3000 from his uncle, but a new directive from the dean states that all debts must be satisfied before a diploma is granted, and Bob's room rent is far in arrears. The escort business gets off to a shaky start, for the first two clients are a taxi driver and his pal. With the aid of the dean's and the landlord's daughter the boys enjoy their first success and Bob even gets a commission on a \$100,000 air conditioning plant for the college. Easy, pretty improbable.—*Robert W. Ensley*.

*Never Say Dye*, a farce in 3 acts, by Austin Goetz. 5 m., 6 w. Royalty, \$10. Apparently, from the number of times it is used, the sure way to success for a farce is to have a boy impersonate a girl. *Never Say Dye* uses this formula but arrives with little in the way of originality. Harry Wade wants to marry Madge but she refuses until she is satisfied that her beauty salon won't be profitable. Harry sets out to "insure" that by getting his friend to impersonate a great beauty expert soon to arrive. He proceeds to dye the salon's best customer's hair pink. Confusion only lasts long enough for this to become a fad. Humor wholly dependent upon situations.—*Robert W. Ensley*.

School of the Brown County Ursulines, St. Martin, Ohio

*The Legend of Saint Ursula*, a story and pantomime with eight tableaux and five dances, comes as a welcome contribution to the many teachers who are searching for something new with a religious theme, historical in atmosphere, beautiful in artistic pageantry. Told by narrative, dance, pantomime, and tableau, this recent publication was written by one of Saint Ursula's own spiritual daughters, Sister Monica, Ph.D. of the Congregation of the Ursulines of Saint Martin, Ohio. Music, heraldry, and costume add much to the life story of this great sainted woman. The attractively arranged *Legend* should be not only possible in production, but

interesting, inspirational, and artistically successful. To add to her offering, Sister Monica has given valuable production suggestions, in stage setting, music and costume. *The Legend of Saint Ursula* is a real contribution in the field of speech and pageantry. It may well serve as a model or other such contributions wherein might be united all the speech arts in a beautifully conceived life story. Copies .50. Royalty, \$5.00.—*Sister M. Charitas, C.S.J.*

Row, Peterson and Company, Evanston, Ill.

*A Deer of Another Color*, a one-act legendary comedy, by Earl J. Dias. 3 w., 4 m. Non-royalty but seven copies must be purchased. This little play is a charming telling of the Sir Thomas Lucy—Shakespeare legend with a new and satisfactory ending. The characters seem Elizabethan, the dialog sharp and witty, the plot well drawn. Just the sort of play secondary schools should produce.—*Roberta Dinwiddie Sheets*.

*Magic on Main Street*, a one-act play for six women, by Olive Price. Royalty free with purchase of six copies. A harvest festival is being set on the parsonage lawn. Mrs. Blake and her daughter Jennifer are arranging a booth. Jennifer is bored with Mapleville and longs for new scenes. Her sister Margaret, an army nurse, comes to the booth. She tells of places she has been during the war and how boys every place long for Mapleville and fruit in Mason jars. A well-written bit of "love your country." Especially suitable for community groups.—*Roberta Dinwiddie Sheets*.

*Ladies of the Mop*, a short play in rhyme, by Aurand Harris. 4 women. Four copies must be purchased for royalty free production. Scrub women cleaning up a theatre show their talents: reading, singing, playing the piano, dancing, as well as their ability to do a job. The rhyme is sometimes stretched a bit. Doubtful appeal for high school audiences.—*Roberta Dinwiddie Sheets*.

Samuel French, 25 W. 45th Street, New York.

*Uncertain Wings*, a comedy in three acts, by Robert Hill and Floyd Crutchfield. 5 m., 6 w., extra boys and girls. Royalty, \$25. The entire action is set in Pop's Malt Shoppe. *Uncertain Wings* is highly elastic and can be played on the smallest stage as on the largest.

Margaret Foster is a high school career girl who learns the price of success when faced with a choice between entering a State drama tournament and accepting the sponsorship of the high school basketball team. At the risk of losing all her friends and the prestige of a social leader of the school, she elects to follow her star and enter the drama tournament. When she wins the tournament, success and achievement are in her grasp but she has made her sacrifice too and learns that the creative artist must always give up the lesser triumphs for the goal ahead. *Uncertain Wings* is a high school comedy whose events are handled realistically from the attitude of the high school people themselves. The dialogue is youthful and sparkling. The play has unusual opportunities for the director with imagination and initiative to work in many extra types of characters in the malt shoppe scene.—*Carolyn K. Doty*.

*Chicken Every Sunday*, a comedy in three acts, by Julius S. and Philip G. Epstein from the novel of Rosemary Taylor. 9 w., 12 m. Royalty, \$50. Through the door of the best boarding house in Tucson pass boarders who range from a school teacher to an alcoholic giantess. Each queer character entangles himself in the eccentric Blackman family and its problems. Mrs. Blackman is proud of the good meals she serves and her ability to keep a roof over the heads of her family. Mr. Blackman has tried one wildcat scheme after another and has had money one day, only to lose it the next. The plot revolves around his trying to find a sucker for his arroyo enterprise. The young daughter provides the romantic interest. There is a wealth of material for characterization but the dramatists have selected many off-color situations and have relied on the raw innuendo for humor so that the play, while ex-

cellent for community theatres, could seldom be used for secondary school presentation.—*Roberta Dinwiddie Sheets*.

Dramatists Play Service, Inc., 6 E. 39th Street,  
New York 16, N. Y.

*Where the Dear Antelope Play*, a comedy in three acts, by John William Rogers. 4 men, 7 women. Royalty, \$15. Angelique Mather returns from school with the desire to do over her conservative Texas home. She brings a fashionable decorator who meets much opposition from other members of the family. Father has invited the wife of a business acquaintance to stay at the house while she organizes a Society for the Fruitful Use of Leisure. The play is a wholesome comedy, but it will appeal more to community than to high school groups.—*Roberta Dinwiddie Sheets*.

*The Corn Is Green*, a comedy in three acts, by Emlyn Williams. 10 m., 5 w., extras. Int. Royalty on application. As all will know who have seen this play with Ethel Barrymore on the stage or Bette Davis on the screen, this is a comedy only in the strict sense that justice is done and the human heart triumphs over selfishness and passion. The story is of a teacher in a Welsh mining town who gives to the world a man who has the capacity for greatness, molding him from the unpromising material of an illiterate miner addicted to drink, and who finds an adequate reward in her final abnegation. The role of Miss Moffat, the teacher, is one of the finest in the modern theatre. The play requires actors of mature abilities, and would therefore be available to few high schools. It is highly recommended as a project for experienced groups.—*Blandford Jennings*.

*The Hasty Heart*, a comedy-drama in three acts, by John Patrick. 8 m., 1 w. Interior. A play about seven wounded soldiers in a temporary British General Hospital in a jungle setting. The action revolves around a dour Scotsman who (though he does not learn it until the play's climax) has only a few weeks to live. It is the story of how his defensive reserve and self-sufficiency are broken down by the humanity of his comrades and their nurse, until he learns what love is in time to face the end without distrust of "the hasty heart." The play is deeply moving, relieved, however, with many moments of unforced comedy. The leading character would have to be assigned to a strong actor able to project a convincing characterization of a Scotsman with an authentic accent. Apart from this, the play has no extreme difficulties, and might be done by strong high school groups as well as by more mature organizations.—*Blandford Jennings*.

Huer Publishing Company, Cedar Rapids, Iowa.

*Nowhere Fast*, a mystery comedy in 3 acts, by Van Wallen. Royalty, \$10. 4 m., 4 w. One simple setting. Staged at the "Nowhere" Auto Tourist Camp, this play centers about the attempts of a successful detective novelist, Rita Adams, to solve a bank robbery. It seems she gets "nowhere fast," however, due to the strange antics of everyone at Nowhere including Bradford Smythe and Frank Robins. One wears a false beard and the other claims to be lost. All ends well, however, when the sheriff announces the capture of the thieves and an explanation is given for the mysterious actions of the guests at Nowhere. A light, easy-to-do play.—*Elmer S. Crowley*.

*A Handbook of Simplified Play Directions*, by Robert St. Clair, *A Handbook of Do's and Don'ts for Actors and Directors*, by William Fisher, *Practical Suggestions on Makeup for Actors and Directors*, by William Fisher. For those teachers who all of a sudden have been told that it is their obligation to direct the junior or senior play and they have had no formal training in directing, these pamphlets would go a long way in reviving their spirits. In short, concise, simplified statements the authors have stated the basic requirements of such improvised directing and make-up.—*Robert W. Ensley*.

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Prepared by BLANDFORD JENNINGS  
*Clayton High School, Clayton, Missouri*

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# Plays for Spring Production

## BLITHE SPIRIT

By Noel Coward

From a very novel situation Noel Coward has fashioned a play which is hilarious as only a Coward farce can be. The *New York Sun* stated: "Mr. Coward has never, I think, been happier in his inventions or more adept." 2 m., 3 f., 75c. (Royalty, \$50.00.)

## THE DEEP MRS. SYKES

By George Kelly

The author of *Footchippennett*, *The Show-Off* and *Crash's Wife* has accomplished another distinguished and brilliant piece of writing. 6 m., 8 f., \$2.00. (Production restricted. Royalty on application.)

## THIS BEING YOUNG

By Richard Young

The saga of Pam Powers, a fourteen-year-old, up-to-the-minute young lady who is burdened with all the troubles of the world, is bringing in her parents. 7 m., 7 f., 80c. (Royalty, \$10.00.)

## COME RAIN OR SHINE

By Marianne and Joseph Hayes

A gay new comedy by the authors of the extremely popular *And Came the Spring*. The play tells in amusing fashion of the incidents which lead a college-age young lady into a young womanhood which retains the lighthearted charm of youth. Ideal for high schools and colleges. 5 m., 10 f., 75c. (Royalty, \$25.00.)

## BUT NOT GOODBYE

By George Seaton

Amiable fantasy about a ghost who saves his family from bankruptcy in a highly amiable manner. A John Golden production on Broadway. 8 m., 7 f., 75c. (Royalty, \$25.00.)

## THIN ICE

By Betty Ann and Ray H. Mattingly

The amazing story of how the Edwards family gets its \$600 and several family vertebral cracks into place during one eventful Christmas vacation. 6 m., 9 f., 75c. (Royalty, \$25.00.)

## YOUNG MAN OF TODAY

By Aurore Revoredo

The popular author of *Skidding and Steaming Paroxysms* has given us a truly and worthwhile play in this dramatically revealing history of the Jason family—and young America—in the past three years. 10 m., 8 f., 75c. (Restricted in a few instances. Royalty on application where available.)

## SOLDIER'S WIFE

By Rose Franken

This Martha Scott vehicle is concerned with young Mrs. Rogers, who finds herself the author of a best-seller—and with many problems. 2 m., 3 f., \$2.00. (Royalty, where available, quoted on application.)

## CLAUDIA

By Rose Franken

Popular comedy success. Child-wife Claudia meets three cities which lead her into womanhood. Tenderly, humorously told, the story has universal appeal—a big hit! 3 m., 5 f., 75c. (Royalty, \$50.00.)

## THE FIGHTING LITTLES

By Caroline French

Booth Tarkington's recent novel makes an amiable and delightful family comedy. Through three acts the quick-tempered Littles squabble their way through differences in viewpoint and ridiculous situations without even knowing how funny they are. 3 m., 10 f., 75c. (Royalty, \$25.00.)

## THE DOCTOR HAS A DAUGHTER

By George Ratushny

The author of the popular *Every Family Has One* relates the comic adventures and misadventures of a small town junior male whose over-active imagination gets everyone into hot water but finally emerges triumphant. 3 m., 7 f., 75c. (Royalty, \$25.00.)

## SPRING GREEN

By Florence Ryerson and Collie Clements

Most often produced by Thesman-Affiliated Schools during the 1944-45 season. Another funny play by the authors of the outstanding *Ever Since Eve* and *True Madie*: about a boy whose father doesn't understand him and a girl whose mother understands her only too well. 8 m., 7 f., 75c. (Royalty, \$25.00.)

## EVERY FAMILY HAS ONE

By George Ratushny

The eccentric Beardons, overimpressed with their ancestry, are brought sharply to their senses when cantankerous Grandma and a pretty visiting cousin drag skeletons from the closets, causing comic mayhem. 3 m., 7 f., 75c. (Royalty, \$25.00.)

## AND CAME THE SPRING

By Marianne and Joseph Hayes

New, worthwhile comedy of youth about a charming hoyden who, under the influence of Spring and first love, disrupts a pleasant, typical American home in a brightly humorous manner. Touched with sentiment. Designed to entertain. 9 m., 3 f., 75c. (Royalty, \$25.00.)

## HARRIET

By Florence Ryerson and Collie Clements

An outstanding Broadway hit with Helen Hayes. It is based on the life of one of the greatest American women of the nineteenth century, Harriet Beecher Stowe. 7 m., 10 f., 75c. (Royalty, \$30.00.)

## MURDER AT RANDOM

By Robert Finch

Humor and surprise are the keynotes of this unusual mystery-comedy which had to do with the adventures of a young man forced to spend a night in an old farmhouse. 7 m., 6 f., 75c. (Royalty, \$25.00.)

## JANIE

By Josephine Bentham and Herschel Williams

The hilarious Broadway hit which tells what happens when a cavalcade of exuberant fellows in uniform meet a crew of high school young ladies and their desire to throw a party. 11 m., 8 f., 75c. (Royalty, \$50.00.)

## WHEN GINNY COMES MARCHING HOME

By Willow Brown

This new comedy, by the author of *Aunt Fannie Gets to Town*, is concerned with the absurdly comic experiences that befall Ginny upon her return from the WACs. 5 m., 7 f., 80c. (Budget Play.)

## MAMA HAD A HUNCH

By Nan Fleming

Mama Kincaid is given no warning on hunches which have a way of backfiring with disastrous results. General chaos reigns in the charming Kincaid house hold. 3 m., 6 f., 80c. (Royalty, \$10.00.)

## LIFE AT AUNT MINNIE'S

By Peggy Fenway

Peggy Fenway, author of *The Girls Take Over*, gives us a brand new concoction with hilarity as the main ingredient. 3 m., 7 f., 80c. (Budget Play.)

## THE GHOST TRAIN

By Arnold Ridley

Suspense predominates in this fascinating mystery-thriller which tells how daring romancers take advantage of a New England legend concerning a phantom train. 7 m., 4 f., 75c. (Royalty, \$25.00.)

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